15

Robertus Drury miles.

William Drury, miles: Robertus Drury miles: Domina Jarmin. Domina Jarmingam. Domina Alington.

Margery

Margery Jarmingham ux Alston

Edwarde Waldegrave Ar

Thomas Calthorpp, of

take thow this treatise thi time therin to vse
to thende thow truly taste the treasures tolerne
trifle not in tranaylin thi time for to absse
take and hye but tuyse and thy thi purpose tattayne

Q:3:

ffor of all Tresses
Learnynge is the flowre
3.

ffor of all Tresses
Learnynge is the flowre

Mul steyes si bon apm tampes bien vse

Tinke thow this treatise thy time therin to vse

Semper boni aliquid fiat vt [illegible]

Vse bien tampes cjcl

Notandum est etate quam sito pede preterit atas
nec bonam famam sapientia quam bona prima fuit

Equul schos si bon qui tampes
3 bien use

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Dna Jermeyan

Dna Jermeyan

Wulfe in ſadede oflepe not ffully redyned
Rudely my ſylfe ad ſlaȝ alone
With troubled dremar ſore chaȝ mi3tyd
Att Worldely ioy paſſyd and origone
Me demyd ffull ſore ȝ mudde my mone
Off tyme paſſyd and leſte and tyme to come
Allyndo thowght reſonable wyt hadde ȝ none
Thus ȝ laȝ oflombrynge a ſlepe to my dome
Ad thus ȝ laȝ alwyſed ffull ſore
In ſuche thynges ad off right bythe a gayne nature
I herde a voyce ſeyyng oflepe thou no more
Aryſe vp and wake do thy beſy cure
Thy mynde thy hert thy body thou ſalwe
To ſuche that wyll ffall next the thy mynde
Take thy penne in thy hande ſtedffaſte and ſure
And wake wake off confforte to ffull blyndo
Thys voyce herde I herde and therto ganne I tendyne
I ffelte the entent but I ſtode amaſed
I wyſte not what it ment ffor I ſalle no pryſene
Thus in penyſſemes dere was I raſed
And ad adryſed many gretely a baſed
I ganne no tredewe a non I ffell in ſlepe
ffrome all kyndely wyt clene was I raſed
So to hys wordes I take no grete kepe
I ſuppoſyd yt to hane bene ſome nogiall ffantaſy
Ad ffallyth in dremes in partyes off the nyght
Whyth comeſt off joy or off greue ſumdady
Or off robuſte mete whych tarſeth grete myght
Ouer moche replet obſcuryth the wyght
Off naturell reaſonne and cauſyth idyll thowght
Makyth the body hevy where hyt was lyght
So ſhortely to conclude off thys voyce I me roubght
And nott ſlepte but a lytyll whyle
But thys voyce well I herde to me he ſayde
Awake and aryſe thou doſte thy ſylfe be gyle
Aryſe ffrom the place where thou art layde
Wyth that I awoke and ffrom my ſlepe braȝed
Marueylyng much And ſayde Benedicte
Ad man vnreſonable gretely dyſmayed
Ey goddelorde what thyng may thys be
Gretely troubled yet ffeythffully I beleuyd
That the voyce came ffrome the celeſtyall place
Wherefore I aryſe not gretely agredyd
And be mubght god off hys eſpeſyall grace
That he wolde be my counſeyle in this caſe
Dreyng as yt ſtode wyth hert and wyll
Aryſyng ſtill lyghtely my ſylfe dyd I braſe
Ad aȝynſt my prayoure vndyr this ſkyll

Reformer off mankynde ons y ſay.
Eternall kynge and prynce moſte emperyall.
Verray god and man O blessyd trynyte.
Which ffrom owre mortall enemye redemyſt vs all.
And madeſt vs ffree wherefore we owre thrall.
Thorowgh dyvyne counſayls off thy godhede.
the to thy grace reconſyle and call.
Whome thoſu haſte formyd to the fygure off thy manhed.
And ryth thy godhed hathe endelled me.
Wyth vertuous-ly-or-ny. ffull reſonable.
Wyth owyt mynde reſone and volunte
And othyr mo ffull delectable.
yet I confeſſe my dyſſ moſte vnable-
Wyth any thynge to medle that gronndyth yo vn prudens.
Off eloqueno but ſymple my comunyng yo vnſtable.
Therefore m me thenke yo no grete nfluento.
But o gode lorde ryth yo knowe hyt yo thy glo-
Do yo conſeyve by the wayes that thou dydeſt ſonde.
Thy degre and comaundemet trwly to ffull ffylle.
Wyth mynde hert and body ſelfe and entendy
me ffrom all oppoſyc hepe and deffendy.
In this mattere to the wyth thou haſte wyllyd me
To thee ffrome erth to hevyn dydeſt aſſende.
verey god and ayan o blessyd tynyte.

Incipio materie cum principijs Vers &c

Off thyngs yo ordeynyd by godlyo prodyſyon.
man and beſte ayre wedyr and wynde.
Watt and land wyth they dyſpoſyon.
And eche yr apparens ſtrength wyth theyre tynde.
The zere yo denydeth do ſtrytten ffynde.
In monethes wekes and ſeaſonnes ny.
In which wyth yer cyrnes vy planetys ther do
Off all tymes or ſeaſonnes we wote to compary ſonn.
None yo ffounde ſo gode nor ſo precyous.
Ne none ſo profytable as yo the ſeaſonn.
Off lufty veer whos tayage ſo odorous.
Comfortyth every creature and maketh them corragyus/
Avoydeth all ſulnes and maketh them lufty.
In hert and body gladde prompte and nery.
Whan paſſyd yo all cloudy derkneſſe.
All ſtormy ſtowrys ffrom ſtrende ffrom ſtrondo ffro ſyght.
Whan lufty veer ſtrength wyth hyr ſwetneſſe.
The wedyr clerith and by nature yo bryght.
Thorowout ffull pleſantly ſyſſyth hyr lyght
Whan veer comaundyth Aprylle wyth hyr ſhoures ſwete.
That may bryngo ffoorth frute hyr and ffloures.
All treeo than budyth, & fryſſh ffrute bryngyth.
All medys and corneys ffloryth no profyte.

The nyghtyngale/the thrystelok merely syngyth
Aff ffoulys and bestys ioyeth in they degre
He callsyth all thyngs ffull iocundo to be
Who than yo so precyous or may do more
Than lusty veer whom lykeu to a boy
To thyo bore he yo not lykenyd in condicion onely
But properte, ffor proyte syffen mos ffructuous
And tho bore in that seasonne Approchyth naturally
To lusto and to lykyngo enforsyd maruelo
He walkyth ioyyng whetting hyo tusko
Thynkyng so longe so contynuyth veerio
Nenyr to obey hyo enemyso ffor ffeeuo
He honyth ne he wanyth ffor wyndo no blasto
Be dredyth no mystyo ne stormyo ne otholdryo
But standyth styffe in tryouth strongo as a masto
And to the lyono obeyssant in all holdryo
Redy at hyo volloyt to helpo in all stoldryo
The lyon hyo lordo whey he standyth in distresso
Hyo natyff attendant on the lyonesso
Thyo bore may well be callyd, tho bore off grace
Of whom propheseyso off Antiquite makyth mencion
Which as hyt is sayde wythyn shorto space
Schall in greto nodo socolby tho lyonne
And in that watell gete hym greto renowne
Confoundo hys mortall foue allyo vero greto wyth
That day shall be knowen hyo ornament trubth
In hyo sesone yo ffoundo so pur veyte
And standyth so clone wyth oute transgresso
That all England may soy hyo natyuite
Off contynuelyng trubth he standyth pereles
Hyo progeno nord distayneth at ffalsenes
Syth hyo ffyrst day he hathe contynuelyd so demys
Vn to nolle that he, hoys colourd at azur
Rolle vn to thyo blede boy honor and grace
Soy laude and prayseyng ffortune and magnyfycens
Thise avaunt thym off grace suche soy to purchace
As may be worthy vn to hyo benezens
ffor envy nd ffeyfull tyouth hathe bow hyo gynaueus
Whoys foy nolle off all England he hathe aduantage
Oute except tho blode tryll the noste trubyste lynage
Be tbyot veer and thyo vnyt no diuision
They standyth as one who vnderstondyth a wyth
Veer and thyo blede bore thatbey grete renoun
At that tyme standyng Aduentuo buysshe
Dechyng auenturo and prouyng hyo myght
In hotheneso zor thy sey that Aubery the grym
Be nome the blede boy hyo chyefte hymne
To ffor the prodes off thyo vnyssbyssbe buysh

That sleeue thyo Bore thoroueth strengyth off thynalyy.
At thyo Annesty's enyy syth off veray dyolo eyght.
Beryth hym Arure enaymyd wt gold depending by.
The Worshipfull Armys off the olde Annestrys.
Quartely goulle and goold And in the thyoo quart?
A nolet .b. poynto sylnes Ao I shall tell hoy after.
Be holde nolbe the mahode prodese and thynaly.
Trolyth ffortmo Grace and pasfyto stedfastnes
That enyy hath contynued m thyo progenio
So whey hyt ffortmed to staude in distresse.
The kynge off Englande wt the laud off hethynes.
A knyght off thyo Annestryy gomo off hyo prysshnes.
ffoy hyo kynge thyo ho dyde off hyo grete affynite.
Remebryng hyo mahode confoyrd wt the holygoste.
Consydeyng hyo feyth he drede no woo.
At myduyght fyste he semblod the kyngy coste.
The myght so deyde not knolbyng hyo foo.
To the kynge vnlbytting that hyt sholde be so.
Prayng ffull hartly he sfyll to the grounde.
That god wolde sende hym lyght hyo enemys to confounde.
To thyo prayolby so devonte god gane/grauntion.
Not dyelling hys cristned flygur vtterly to be dystt
Euery may than kneelyng devolotely sayde ther ovyssond.
Loude ffor thy pyte haue merey on olby gylt.
Sane so ou sowll so do as thou dyst.
Thyo prayo ffynyshed they sprange into hyo schelde
A.b. poynto nollet which lyghtyd all hyo ffelde
Thyo he was inspyred wt the grace off the holygoste.
Hyo enemyes were obstunyd and wyde off all myght
God confoundyd and thereby hym and all hyo ooste.
And endelby thyo nollet wt a plentuous lyght.
The hethynd were obstunyd and hadde no syght.
So he put hyo enemyes to vtter confusyonne.
Hy stressyd the feldo and gate hym grete renowne.
O thou Royall Bore ffull fyllyd wyth grace.
That off Cuchs a nollet norbe hathe dnatiow.
Cryste graunt the contynuelyng tyme and place.
That the nollet may resplendo on ody legiow.
Worthely and knyghtely As a lordo off renowne.
And ffor the encrese off thy lyght that hyt ffall not deyke
All England olbyth to pay wt entyer deuocione.
Iuan thyder and dyffe bothe preste and cleyke. Amen
To hyrett palade ffull fruite off composicion.
Softe and meekely no thyngo to boldo.
Pray all that off thys shall haue inspexion.
Thy darke ygnouraunce that they pardon wolde
Sey that thos Reys made in a pryssone colde.
Thy maden standyng in dysdo and grenunce
Which called hym thus so symply to daunce

confusion ER
of your Working

ffortune be
ffrendely to

Mr Rotheley

i. DVRVM ſ PATI 68

From ſone abone aſpendyng breath
yſ ſent to vs to ſeade our lyfe
to lyue to dye whan hatefull death
ſhall vyd vs hense. and ſtynt our ſtryfe
My ynward mane to heauenly thyngs wold trade me.
And ſtyll thys fleaſh: doth euermore dyſſwade me.

R North ſ

Retaine, refuſe, no frend, no foe
Condeme, alowe, no chance, no choiſe
your fame, your life, ſhall end, ſhall growe
no bade, no good, ſhall pine, reioice
So helpe ſo hate, miſtruſt your frend
as blisfull daies your life may end

RA

Wherby cogn[illegible]

Mary

Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
The drighte of whych hath perced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour
Whan zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth
The tendre croppes and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne
And smale foweles maken melodye
That slepen al the nyght with open eye
So priketh hem nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes kowthe in sondry londes
And specially from euery shires ende
Of Engelond to Canterbury they wende
The hooly blisful martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seke
Bifil that in that seson on a day
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Canterbury with ful deuout corage
At nyght were come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk by aduenture yfalle
In felaweshipe and pilgrimes were they alle
That toward Canterbury wolden ryde
The chambres and the stables weren wyde
And wel we weren eseed atte beste
And shortly whan the sonne was to reste
So hadde I spoken with hem euerichon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon
And made forward erly for to ryse
To take our way there as I you deuyse
But nathelees whil I haue tyme & space
Er that I ferther in this tale pace
Me thynketh it acordaunt to reson
To telle you al the condicion
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whiche they were and of what degree
And eek in what array that they were inne
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne
A knyght ther was and that a worthy man
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out he loued chyualrie
Trouthe and honour fredom and curteisie
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre
And therto hadde he ridden no man ferre

1 · col m Apete m

knyght m

A Knyght ther was and that a worthy man
That fro the tyme that he first began
To ryden out he loved chivalrie
Trouthe and honour fredom and curteisie
Ful worthy was he in his lordes warre
And therto hadde he ridden no man ferre
As well in cristendom as in hethenesse
And ever honoured for his worthinesse
At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacions in Prusse
In lettowe hadde he reysed and in ruce
No cristen man so ofte of his degree
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir and riden in Belmarye
At lyeys was he and at Satalye
Whan they were wonne and in the grete see
At manye a noble armee hadde he be
At mortal batailles hadde he been fifteene
And foughten for our feith at Tramyssene
In lystes thries and ay slayn his foo
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
Sometyme with the lord of Palatye
Agayn another hethen in Turkye
And evermoore he hadde a soverayn prys
And though that he were worthy he was wys
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde
He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf unto no manere wight
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght
But for to tellen yow of his array
His hors were goode but he was nat gay
Of fustian he wered a gipon
Al bismotered with his habergeon
For he was late ycome from his viage
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage
With hym ther was his sone a yong Squier
A lovyere and a lusty bacheler
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse
Of twenty yeer of age he was I gesse
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe
And wonderly delyvere and of grete strengthe
And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
In Flaundres in Artoys and Picardie
And born hym wel as of so litel space
In hope to stonden in his lady grace
Embrouded was he as it were a meede
Al ful of freshe flowres white and reede
Syngynge he was or floytynge al the day
He was as fresh as is the monthe of may
Short was his gowne with sleves longe and wyde
Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde
He koude songes make and wel endite
Juste and eek daunce and wel purtreye and write

So hoote he louede, that by nyghtertale
he slepte nauoore than doth a nyghtyngale
Curteis he was, lowely, and seruysable
And carf biforn his fadyr at the table
Yemman hadde he, and seruantz namo
At that tyme, for hym list ride so
And he was clad, in cote & hood of grene
A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene
Under his belt, he bar ful thriftily
Wel koude he, dresse his takel yemanly
His arwes drouped noght, with fetheres lowe
And in his hand, he bar a mighty bowe
A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage
Of wodecraft, wel koude he al the vsage
Vpon his arm, he bar a gay bracer
And by his syde, a swerd and a bokeler
And on that oothir syde, a gay dagger
Harneised wel, and sharp as point of spere
A Cristofre on his brest of siluer sheene
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene
A forster was he, soothly as I gesse
Ther was also, a nonne, a Prioresse
That of hir smylyng was ful simple & coy
Hir gretteste ooth, was but by seint loy
And she was cleped, madame Eglentyne
Ful wel she soong, the seruice dyuyne
Entuned in hir nose, ful semely
And frenssh she spak, ful faire and fetisly
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe
For frenssh of Paris, was to hir vnknowe
At mete wel ytaught, was she with alle
She leet no morsel, from hir lippes falle
Ne wette hir fyngres, in hir sauce depe
Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe
That no drope, ne fille vpon hir brest
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir list
Hir ouer lippe, wyped she so clene
That in hir coppe, ther was no ferthyng seene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte
And sikerly, she was of great desport
And ful pleasaunt, and amyable of port
And peynes hir to counterfete cheere
Of court, and to been estatlich of manere
And to ben holden digne of reuerence
But for to speken of hir conscience
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde weepe if that she sawgh a mous

Yemman

Prioresse

Caught in a trappe / if it Cheye deed or bledde
Of smale houndes / hadde she / pt she fedde
With rosted flesshe / or milk and Wastel breed
But sooke Cepte she / if any of hem Cheye deed
Or if men smoot it / Cith a yerde smerte
And al Cas conscience and tendre herte
Ful semyly / hir Cympul pynches Cas
Hir nose tretys / hir eyen greye as glas
Hir mouth ful smal / and they to softe & reed
But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed
It Cas almoost / a spanne brood / I trowe
For faire she Cas nat undergrowe
Ful fetys Cas hir cloke / as I Cas Car
Of smal coral / aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes / gauded al Cith grene
And ther on heng a broch of gold ful sheene
On Cich / this Cas first Crite a crowned . a
And after / Amor vincit omnia .
Another nonne / Ct hir hadde she
That Cas hir Chapeleyne and preestes thre
A monk ther Cas / a fair for the maistrie
An outrydere / that louede venerie
A manly man / to been an Abbot able
Ful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable
And Cham he rood / men myghte his bridel heere
Gynglen / in a Chistlynge Cynd als cleere
And eek as loude / as doth the Chapel belle
Ther as this lord / Cas kepere of the celle
The reule of seint Maure / or of seint Benet /
Cy cause that it Cas old and streit /
This ilke monk / let olde thynges pace
And heeld after the newe Corld the space
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen
That seith / that hunters been nat holy men
Ne that a monk Cham he is Crecheles
Is likned til a fissh / pt is Cateles
This is to seyn / a monk out of his cloystre
But thilke text / heeld he nat worth an oistre
And I seyde his opinion Cas good
What sholde he studie & make hymself Cood
Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure
Or swinken Ct his handes and laboure
As Austyn bit / how shal the Corld be served
Lat Austyn Cake his owene swynk to hym reserved
Therfore he Cas a pricasour aright
Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Cas al his lust . for no Cost Colde he spare

Nonne & iij preestes.

Monk.

Iolyf his eyen dyuyned at the hous
With gyys and that the fynest of a lous
And for to festne his hood vnder his chyn
He hadde of gold ywrought a ful curious pyn
A lowe knotte in the gretter ende there was
His heed was balled / pt schon as any glas
And eek his face / as it hadde been enoynt /
He was a lord ful fat / and in good point /
His eyen steep and pollyng in his heed
That stemed as a fornays of a leed
His bootes couple / his hors in gret estaat /
Now certeinly / he was a fair prelaat /
He was nat pale / as a forpyned goost
A fat swan loued he best of any roost /
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye

Tffiere.

Tffiere they was a Kantoribne & a nonnye
A lymytour / a ful solempne man
In alle the ordres foure is noon pt kan
So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wymmen / at his owene cost /
Vnto his ordre he was a noble post /
And wel biloued / and famulier was he
With frankeleyns ouer al in his contree
And with worthy wymmen of the toun
For he hadde power of confessioun
As seyde hym self / moore than a curat /
For of his ordre / he was licenciat /
Ful swetely / herde he confessioun
And pleasaunt was his absolucioun
He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce
Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce
For vnto a poure ordre / for to yiue
Is signe / pt a man is wel yshryue
For if he yaf / he dorste make auaunt
He wiste / that a man was repentaunt /
For many a man / so hard is of his herte
He may nat wepe / al thogh hym sore smerte
Therfore in stede of weping and prieres
Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres
His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues
And pynnes / for to yeuen yonge wyues
And certeinly / he hadde a murye note
Wel coude he synge / and pleyen on a rote
Of yeddynges he bar outrely the pris
His neke / whit was / as the flour-delys
Therto he strong was as a champioun
He knew the tauernes wel in al the toun

A Nys euesich Hostiler aus Tappestere
Wet than a lazar or a beggestere
For vn to swich a worthy man as he
Accordes nat as by his facultee
To haue with sike lazars aqueyntaunce
It is nat honeste it may nat auaunce
For to deelen with no swich porraille
But al ffet riche and selleres of vitaille
And ouer al they as ffit sholde ayse
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse
Ther was no man nowher so vertuous
He was the beste beggere in his hous
For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho.
So plesaunt was his In principio
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente
His pursuyt was wel bettre than his wente
And yaf he wolde as lowe as ever he myght
Yet hadde he often tyme gret profyt
In lowe dayes they wolde he wynche hele
For they he was nat lyk a cloystrer
With a thredbare cope as is a pore scoler
But he was lyk a maister or a pope
Of double worstede was his semycope
That rounded as a belle out of the presse
Somwhat he lipsed for his wantownesse
To make his englissh sweete upon his tonge
And in his harpyng when pt he hadde songe
Ful wel his eyen twynkled in his hed aryght
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght
This worthy lytuyt was cleped Hubert

A Wayward was they ful a forkes heed
In motley and hye on horse he sat
Upon his hed a ffrankeys cappe was hat
His bootes clasped faire and fetisly
His resons he spak ful solempnely
Sownynge alwey the encrees of his wynnyng
He wolde the see were kept for any thyng
Bitwixe wynchelse and Orewelle
Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette
Ther wiste no wight pt he was in dette
So estatly was he of his governaunce
With his bargaynes and eek his chevyssaunce
For sothe he was a worthy man with alle
But sooth to seyn I noot how men hym calle

A clerk of Oxenford also
That vn to logyk hadde longe ygo
As leene was his hors as is a rake
And he was nat right fat I vndertake

But lookes holde and ther-to soberly
fful thredbare was his ouerleste courtepy
ffor he hadde geten hym yet no benefice
Ne was so worldly for to haue office
ffor hym was leuere haue at his beddes hees
Twenty bookes clad in blak or reed
Of Aristotle and his philosophie
Than robes riche or fithele or gay sautrie
But al be that he was a philosophre
yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre
But al pt he myghte of his freendes hente
On bookes and on lernynge he it spente
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem pt yaf hym wher-with to scolaye
Of studie took he moost cure & moost heede
Noght o word spak he moore than was neede
And that was sayd in forme and reuerence
And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche
A sergeant of the lawe war and wys
That often hadde been at the parvys
Ther was also ful riche of excellence
Discreet he was and of great reuerence
He semed swich his wordes weren so wise
Justice he was ful often in assise
By patente and by pleyn commission
ffor his science and for his high renon
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon
So great a purchasour was nowhere noon
Al was fee symple to hym in effect
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect
Nowhere so busy a man as he there nas
And yet he semed busier than he was
In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle
That from the tyme of kyng William were falle
Therto he koude endite and make a thyng
There koude no wight pynche at his writyng
And every statut koude he pleyn by rote
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint of silk with barres smale
Of his array telle I no lenger tale
A frankeleyn was in his compaignye
Whit was his heed as is a daysye
Of his complexioun he was sanguyn
Wel loued he by the morwe a sop in wyn
To lyven in delit was ever his wone
For he was Epicurus owene sone

Sergeant of lawe

ffrankeleyn

That heeld opinion / that plein delit
Was verray felicitee parfit
An housholdere and that a grete was he
Seint Julian was he in his contree
His breed his ale / was alweys after oon
A bettre envyned man was nevere noon
Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous
Of fissh and flesh / and that so plenteous
It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees / that men koude thynke
After the sondry sesons of the yeer
So chaunged he his mete and his soper
Ful many a fat partrich / hadde he in mewe
And many a breem / and many a luce in stuwe
Woo was his cook but if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp / and redy al his geere
His table dormant / in his halle alway
Stood redy covered / al the longe day
At sessions / ther was he lord and sire
Ful often tyme he was knyght of the shire
An anlaas / and a gipser al of silk
Heeng at his girdel / whit as morne milk
A shirreve hadde he been and countour
Was nowhere swich a worthy vavasour

An haberdassher / and a carpenter
A webbe / a dyere / and a tapycer
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree
Of a solempne / and a greet fraternitee
Ful freshly / and newe hir geere apiked was
Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras
But al silver / wroght ful clene and weel
Hir girdles / and hir pouches everydeel
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys
Everich / for the wisdom / that he kan
Was shaply for to been an alderman
For catel hadde they ynogh / and rente
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente
And elles certein were they to blame
It is ful fair / to been ycleped madame
And goon to vigilies / al biforn
And have a mantel roialliche yborn

A cook / with
Cook they hadde with hem / for the nones
To boille the chiknes with the marybones
And poudre marchant tart / and galyngale
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of london ale
He koude roste / and sethe / and boille / and frye
Make mortreux / and wel bake a pye

But greet hym was it as it thoughte me
That on his shyne a mexnal hadde he
ffor blankmanger that made he with the beste
A Shipman was they wonynge fer-by weste
ffor augst I woot he was of Dertemouthe
He rood vpon a rouncy as he kouthe
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee
A dagger hangynge on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke vnder his arm adoun
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun
And certeinly he was a good felawe
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he drawe
ffro Burdeuxward whil that the chapman sleep
Of nyce conscience took he no keep
If pt he faught and hadde the hyer hond
By watir he sente hem hoom to euery lond
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes
His stremes and his daungers hym bisides
His herbergh and his moone his lodemenage
Ther nas noon swich from hulle to cartage
Hardy he was and wys to vndertake
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake
He knew alle the hauenes as they were
ffro Gootlond to the cape of ffynystere
And euery cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne
His barge ycleped was the maudelayne
A Doctour of phisik
With hym there was a Doctour of phisik
In al this worlde ne was ther noon hym lik
To speke of phisik and of surgerye
ffor he was grounded in astronomye
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
In houres by his magyk natureel
Wel knew he the fortunen the ascendent
Of his ymages for his pacient
He knew the cause of euery maladye
Were it of hoot or cold or moyste or drye
And where they engendred and of what humour
He was a verray parfit praktisour
The cause yknowe and of his harm the roote
Anon he yaf the sike man his boote
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
To sende hym drogges and his letuaries
ffor ech of hem made oother for to winne
Hir frendshipe was nat newe to bigynne
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius
And Deyscorides and eek Rufus
Olde ypocras Haly and Galyen
Serapion Razis and Auycen

Ouesyons Damastien and Constantyn
Bernard and Gatesden and Gilbertyn
Of his secte mesurable was he
ffor it was of no surfluitee
But of grect norissyng and discrecioun
his studie was but litel on the bible
In dangerys and in pes he was al
hymes with taffata and with sendal
And yet he was but esy of dispence
he kepte that he wan in pestilence
ffor gold in phisik is a cordial
Therfore he louede gold in special
For gold in phisik is a good cordial

The goode lif of Gatho

A good wif was they of biside bathe
But she was somdel deef & pt was scathe
Of cloth makyng she hadde swich an haunt
She passed hem of ypres and of gaunt
In al the parisshe wif ne was they-noon
That to the offryngе biforе hyr sholde goon
And if they-side certeyn so wrooth was she
That she was out of alle charitee
hyr coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground
I dorste make they weyeden ten pound
That on a sonday were upon hyr heed
hyr hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed
fful streite yteyed and shoes ful moyste & newe
Bold was hyr face and fair and red of hewe
She was a worthy womman al hyr lyve
housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve
Withouten other compaignye in youthe
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem
she hadde passed many a straunge stream
At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne
In Galice at Seint Jame and at Coloigne
She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye
Gat-tothed was she soothly for to seye
Upon an ambler esily she sat
yclothed wel and on hyr heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe
A foot mantel aboute hyr hipes large
And on hyr feet a paire of spores sharpe
In felawshipe wel koude she laughe & carpe
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce
ffor she koude of that art the olde daunce

A good person of a town

A good man was ther of Religioun
And was a poure persoun of a toun
But riche he was of hooly thoght & werk
He was also a lerned man a clerk

That cristes gospel trewely wolde preche
his apostles twelue he sente to teche
Beforne his face into euery cite
and in euery place whider he hymself sholde come
Wente forth two and two
and bad hem spelle her spelle to do
And wisdom for to wynne
and hem armede wel her soules to fynne
Right thus comaunded he vnto his meynee
Whan he hem sente to preche and to teche
And first he hem enchaced wel and faire
Fro worldly vanite hem clene to withdraw
And wolde that thei nowther yode ne rode
Ne hem ne clothede in purs ne in fethere fode
Ne that thei no scrippe bere ne bagge
Ne breed ne money ne hem no rode staf to cary
Ne shode be in shon ful thynne and bare
Ne two cotes for to weren hem bifore and bihynde
For sothe the werkman is worth his hyre
But specially pes sholde thei first desire
Into what hous so thei sholde gon
Whan thei therinne entred first pes to bidde anon
And if pes therinne wel receyued be
Her pes shal there dwelle and restes hem by
But if pes profre wolde nought availle
Ageyn to hem it shal turne withouten fayle
Into what toun also thei come
Yf men hem nolde receyue ne make hem frome
Out of the toun right tho thei sholde gon
And of her feet the dust fulle clene shake anon
For a witnesse vnto hem self that thei
Despised hem that nolde hem nought receyue ne here
Thus wolde crist his apostles wel enforme
Er thei went fro him her office for to performe
And taught hem eke in what manere wise
Thei sholde the people in preching chastise
Fyrst sholde thei hem blame her olde wrake
And sharply hem manace for her olde sinnes sake
For pryde for enuye for wrathe and for enuenyng
For auarice for leccherie and for lesyng
For glotonye for sleuthe and for vilanye
For rancour and for false couetyse
For hate of trouthe and loue of vanite
And for her breche of charite
And whan thei hadde the folke chastised thus
Tho sholde thei preche vnto hem charite and vertuous
Of the ioyes of heuene and of the blisse
Where as the holy goste hath his duellyng
Where as is euerlastyng reste and pes
Where as is pleyn remissioun of alle her mysdedes
Where as is euerlastyng ioye and blisse
Where as is euerlastyng ioye and blisse
Where as is euerlastyng ioye and blisse

A Plowman

With hym there was a Plowman was his brother
That hadde ylad of donge ful many a fother
A trewe swynkere and a good was he
Lyuynge in pees and parfit charitee
God loued he best with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes thogh he gamed or smerte
And thanne his neighebore right as hymself
He wolde thresshe and therto dyke and delue
For cristes sake for every poure wight
Withouten hire if it lay in his myght
His tithes payde he ful faire and wel
Bothe of his owene swynk and his catel
In a tabard he rood vpon a mere

A Millere

Ther was also a Reue and a Millere
A Somnour and a Pardoner also
A mannciple and myself ther were namo

A Mannciple

The Millere was a stout carl for the nones
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones
That preued wel for oueral ther he cam
At wrastlynge he wolde haue alwey the ram
He was short shuldred brood a thikke knarre
Ther was no dore that he nolde heue of harre
Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed
And therto brode as though it were a spade
Vpon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte and therin stood a toft of herys
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres
His nosethirles blake were and wyde
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his syde
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys
He was a janglere and a goliardeys
And that was moost of synne and harlotries
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold pardee
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he
A baggepype wel koude he blowe and sowne
And therwithal he broghte vs out of towne

A Mannciple

A gentil mannciple was ther of a temple
Of which achatours myghte take exemple
For to be wise in byynge of vitaille
For whether they that he payde or took by taille
Algate he waytede so in his achat
That he was ay biforn and in good stat
Now is nat that of god a ful fair grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men
Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten

That ꝛeꝛen of lakke / expert / and auisous
Of ekliche / per ꝛeꝛen a duszeÿue in that hous
ꝛoꝛthÿ to been thÿ ꝛaydes / of yeute and lond
Of anÿ loꝛd / that is in Engelond
To makeu hÿm lÿus / bÿ his ꝛyꝛe goods
In hono^r bettelees / but if he ꝛeye ꝛood
Oꝛ lÿue as ꝛtaꝛkly / as hÿm list / deꝛire
And able / foꝛ to helpeu al a ꝛhire
In anÿ ꝛaas / pt myghte falle oꝛ happe
And yet this maunciple / sette his aller cappe
¶ Aeue ...
He ꝛeue ꝛas / a ꝛtrouge colerik man
His beꝛd ꝛas ꝛhaue / as nÿ as euer he kan
His heer ꝛas bÿ his eÿꝛ / ful pound yꝛhoꝛn
His top ꝛas dokked lÿk a preeꝛt biforn
Ful longe ꝛeye his legges / and ful leene
ylÿk a ꝛtaf / ther ꝛas no calf ÿ ꝛeene
Ekel koude he kepe a gerner / and a bynne
Ther ꝛas noon auditour / koude of hym ꝛynne
Ekel wiste he bÿ the droghte / and bÿ the reyn
The yeldÿnge of his ꝛeed / and of his greyn
His loꝛdes ꝛheep / his neet / his dayerÿe
His ꝛwyn / his hoꝛs / his ꝛtoꝛe / and his pultrye
Ras hoolly in his reues gouernyng /
And bÿ his couenaunt yaf the reckenyng /
Syn that his loꝛd ꝛas twenty yeer of age
Ther koude no man bringe hym in arrerage
Ther nas baillif no herde / noꝛ other hyne
That he knewe his sleighte and his couyne
Ther ꝛeye nas nan of hym / as of the reeth
His ꝛtorye ꝛas ful faire vpon an heeth
With grene trees / shawes ꝛas his place
He koude bettre than his loꝛd purchace
Ful riche he ꝛas astoꝛed priuely
His loꝛd ekel koude he plesen subtilly
To yeue and lene hym of his owene goods
And haue a thank / and yet a gowne and hoods
In youthe he hadde lerned a good mÿstier
He ꝛas a ꝛtark good Enghiste a carpenter
This reue sat vpon a ful good stot
That ꝛas al pomely grey / and highte Scot
A long surcote of pers vpon he hadde
And bÿ his ꝛyde he bar a rusty blade
Of Northfolk ꝛas this reue / of which I telle
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle
Tukked he ꝛas as is a frere aboute
And ever he rood the hyndreste of oure route
¶ Domenoun ...
Domenoun ꝛas ther ÿ ꝛet ꝛe in that place
That hadde a fÿr reed cherubynnes face

For sauce-flewm he was with eyen nayfe
As hoot he was and lecherous as a sparwe
With scales bookes blake and pilles beyd
Of his visage children were afeyd
Ther nas apyk nor vernycle bytwixe noon
Boras Ceruce ne oille of Tartre noon
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte
That hym myghte helpen of the whelkes white
Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes
Wel lowed he gayleek oynons and eek lekes
And for to drynken strong wyn reed as blood
Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood
And whan pt he wel dronken hadde the wyn
Thanne wolde he speke no word but latyn
A fewe termes hadde he two or three
That he had lerned out of som decree
No wonder is he herde it al the day
And eek ye knowen wel how pt a jay
Kan clepen watte as wel as kan the pope
But whoso koude in oother thynge hym grope
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie
Ay questio quid iuris wolde he crie
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf monthe and excuse hym atte fulle
Ful prively a fynch eek wolde he pulle
And if he foond owher a good felawe
He wolde techen hym to have noon awe
In swich cas of the erchedekenes curse
But if a mannes soule were in his purse
For in his purse he sholde ypunysshed be
Purse is the erchedekenes helle seyde he
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede
Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede
For curs wol slee right as assoilyng savith
And also warn hym of a significavit
In danger hadde he at his owene gise
The yonge girles of the diocise
And knew hir conseil and was al hir reed
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
As gret as it were for an ale stake
A bokeler hadde he maad hym of a cake

With hym they was a gentil pardoner
Of Rouncivale his freend and his compeer
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome
Ful loude he song com hider love to me

This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun
Was neuere trompe of half so greet a soun
This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex
But smoothe it heeng as doth a strike of flex
By ounces heenge his lokkes pt he hadde
And therwith he his shuldres oerspradde
But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon
But hood for jolitee wered he noon
For it was trussed up in his walet
Hym thoughte he hadde al of the newe jet
He hadde no heer upon his chappe he hadde al bare
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare
A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe
His walet biforn hym in his lappe
Bret ful of pardon comen from Rome al hoot
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot
No berd hadde he ne neuer sholde have
As smoothe it was as it were late shave
I trowe he were a gelding or a mare
But of his craft fro Berwik into Ware
Ne was there swich another Pardoner
For in his male he hadde a pilwe beer
Which pt he seyde was oure lady veyl
He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That seint Peter hadde whan pt he wente
Upon the see til Jhu crist hym hente
He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones
But with thise relikes whan pt he fond
A povre person dwellyng upon lond
Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
Than pt the person gat in monthes tweye
And thus with feyned flateryng and japes
He made the person and the people his apes
But trewely to tellen atte laste
He was in churche a noble ecclesiaste
Wel koude he rede a lesson or a storie
But alderbest he song an offertorie
For wel he wiste whan pt song was songe
He moste preche and wel affile his tonge
To wynne siluer as he ful wel koude
Therfore he song the murierly and loude
Now have I told yow shortly in a clause
The staat tharray the nombre & eek the cause
Why pt assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrye
That highte the Tabard fast by the Belle
But now is tyme to yow for to telle

Hold that we haven vs that ilke nyght
Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght
And after wol I telle of our viage
And al the peneuaunt of our pilgrimage
But first I pray yow of your curteisye
That ye narette it nat my vilenye
Though pt I pleynly speke in this materie
To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere
Ne though I speke hir wordes properly
For this ye knowen also wel as I
Who so shal telle a tale after a man
He moot rehercen as ny as ever he kan
Everich a word if it be in his charge
Al speke he never so rudelich or large
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe
Or feyne thyng or finde wordes newe
He may nat spare al though he were his brother
He moot as wel seye o word as another
Crist spak himself ful brode in holy writ
And wel ye woot no vilenye is it
Eek Plato seith whoso kan him rede
The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede
Also I prey yow to forgeve it me
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Here in this tale as pt they sholde stonde
My wit is short ye may wel vnderstonde
Greet chiere made our hoost vs everichon
And to the soper sette he vs anon
He serued vs with vitaille at the beste
Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke vs leste
A semely man our hoost was with alle
For to been a marchal in an halle
A large man he was with eyen stepe
A fairer burgeys was there noon in cheepe
Boold of his speche and wys and wel ytaught
And of manhod him lakked right naught
Eek therto he was right a myrie man
And after soper pleyen he bigan
And spak of myrthe amonges other thynges
Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges
And seyde thus now lordynges trewely
Ye been to me right welcome hertely
For by my trouthe if that I shal nat lye
I sauh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye
Atones in this herberwe as is now
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe wiste I how
And of a myrthe I am right now bythought
To doon yow ese and it shal coste nought

Ye goon to Cauntebury/ god yow spede
The blisful martyr/ quite yow youre mede
And wel/ coot/ as ye goon by the weye
ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye
ffor trewely/ confort me myghte is noon
To ride by the weye dowmb as the stoon
And therfore/ wol/ I maken yow disport/
As I seyde erst/ and doon yow somme confort/
And if yow liketh alle/ by oon assent/
ffor to stonden/ at my Jugement
And for to werken/ as I shal yow seye
To morwe/ whan ye risen by the weye
Now by my fader soule that is deed
But if ye be myrie/ I wol yeve yow myn heed
Hoold up yowre hondes/ withouten moore speche
Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys
And graunted hym/ wit outen moore avys
And bad hym seye his verdit as hym leste
Lordynges quod he now herkneth for the beste
But taak it noght/ I prey yow in desdeyn
This is the poynt/ to spoken short and pleyn
That ech of yow/ to shorte with oure weye
In this viage/ shal telle tales tweye
To Cauntebury/ ward/ I mene it so
And homward/ he shal tellen othere two
Of aventures/ that whilom han bifalle
And which of yow/ that bereth hym best of alle
That is to seyn/ that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence/ and moost solas
Shal have a soper/ at oure aller cost/
heere in this place/ sittynge by this post/
Whan that we come again fro Cauntebury
And for to make yow the moore myry
I wol myself/ gladly with yow ryde
Right at myn owene cost/ and be youre gyde
And who so wole/ my Jugement withseye
Shal paye/ al that we spenden by the weye
And if ye vouche sauf/ that it be so
Tel me anon/ with outen wordes mo
And I wol erly/ shape me therfore
This thyng was graunted and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte/ and preyden hym also
That he wolde vouche sauf/ for to do so
And that he wolde been oure governour
And of oure tales Juge and reportour
And sette a soper/ at a certein pris
And we wol/ holden at his devys

Thei leigh and lough / and thus by oon assent
We been acordes / to his Juggement
And thei vp on the cyn was set anon
We dronken / and to reste wente echon
Withouten any lenger taryynge
Amorwe whan pt day gan for to spryynge
Vp loos oure hooste / and was oure alley cok
And gadrede vs togidre alle in a flok
And forth we ryden / a litel moore than paas
Vn to the Cateryng / of Seint Thomas
And there oure hooste / bigan his hors areste
And seyde lordyngis / herkneth if yow leste
Ye woot youre forward / and it yow recorde
If euensong / and moorwe song accorde
Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale
As euere mote I drynke / wyn or ale
Who so be rebel to my Jugge ment
Shal paye / for al pt by the weye is spent
Now draweth cut / er pt we ferre twynne
He which pt hath the shorteste shal bigynne
Sire knyght quod he / my maystre and my lord
Now draweth cut / for that is myn accord
Cometh neer quod he / my lady pryoresse
And ye sire clerk / let be youre shamefastnesse
Ne studieth nought / ley hond to euery man
Anon to draweu / euery wight bigan
And shortly / for to tellen as it was
Were it by auentur / or sort / or cas
The sothe is this / the cut fil to the knyght
Of which ful blithe and glad was euery wight
And telle he moste his tale / as was reson
By forward / and by composicion
As ye han herd / what needeth wordes mo
And whan this goode man sawgh pt it was so
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward / by his free assent
He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game
What wel come be the cut / a goddes name
Now lat vs ryde / and herkneth what I seye
And forth that stounde / we ryden forth oure weye
And he bigan / with right a myry cheere
His tale anon / and seyde in this maniere

Iamq; domos patrias Scithice post aspera gentis
prelia laureo ce

Here bigynneth the knyghtes tale

Whilom as olde storyes tellen vs
Ther was a duc ⁊ht highte Theseus
Of Atthenes he was lord and gouernour
And in his tyme swich a conquerour
That gretter was ther noon vnder the sonne
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne
What with his wysdom and his chyualrie
He conquered al the regne of Feminye
That whilom was ycleped Scithia
And wedded the queene Ypolita
And broghte hir hoom with hym in his contree
With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee
And eek hir faire suster Emelye
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde
And al his hoost in armes hym by syde
And ek es if it were to long to heere
I wolde yow haue told fully the manere
How wonnen was the regne of Feminye
By Theseus and by his chyualrye
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones
And how assiged was Ypolita
The faire hardy queene of Scithia
And of the feste ⁊t was at hir weddynge
And of the tempest at hir hoom comynge
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere
I haue god noot a large feeld to ere
And wayke been the oxen in my plough
The remenaunt of the tale is long ynough
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route
Lat euery felawe telle his tale aboute
And lat see now who shal the soper wynne
And ther I lefte I wol ayein bigynne

This duc of whom I make mencioun
Whan he was come almoost vn to the toun
In al his wele and in his mooste pryde
He was war as he caste his eye aside
Where that ther kneled in the weye
A compaignye of ladyes tweye and tweye

Thanne

Thyght ...

Eek after oothey clad in clothes blake
But with a cry and with a vo they make
That in this vorld nys creature lyuynge
That seyde with anothey vaymentynge
And of this cry they nolde neuere stenten
Til they the seynes of his brydel henten
What folk been ye that at myn hom comynge
Distrben so my feste with cryinge
Quod Theseus have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour pt thus compleynie and crye
Or who hath yow myssboden or offended
And telleth me if it may been amended
And why pt ye been clothed thus in blak
The eldeste lady of hem alle spak
Whan she hadde swowned pt a wedly cheere
That it was pitee for to seen and heere
And seyde lord to whom fortune hath yeuen
Victorie and as a conqueror to lyuen
Nat greveth vs your glorie and your honour
But we biseken mercy and socour
Have mercy on our vo and our distresse
Som drope of pitee thurgh thy gentillesse
Vpon vs vrecches yowen nat thou falle
For certes lord they is noon of vs alle
That she ne hath been a Duchesse or a queene
Now be we caytyues as it is wel seene
Thanked be fortune and hire falsse wheel
That noon estaat assureth to be weel
And certes lord to abyden youre presence
Here in the temple of the goddesse clemence
We han been waitynge al this fourtenyght
Now help vs lord sith it is in thy myght
I wrecche which pt wepe and crye thus
Was whilom wyf to kyng Capaneus
That starf at Thebes cursed be that day
And alle we that been in this array
And maken al this lamentacion
We losten alle our housbondes at that toun
Whil that the seege therabout lay
And yet now the olde Creon weylaway
That lord is now of Thebes the Cite
Fulfild of ire and of iniquite
He for despit and for his tyrannye
To do the dede bodyes vileynye
Of alle our lordes whiche that been slawe
He hath alle the bodyes on an heep ydrawe
And wol nat suffren hem by noon assent
Neither to been yburyed nor yheent

But maketh houndes ete hem in despit
And eith that word ete outen mooze respit
They fillen gnif and cryden pitously
Haue on vs wrecches wouen sone mercy
And lat ouse worke wynken in thyn heyte
This gentil Duc doun stoun his corusey steyte
Eith heyte pitous whan he herde hem speke
Hym thoughte pt his heyte wolde breke
Whan he raugh hem so pitous and so matt
That whilom weren of so greet estatt
And in his armes he hem alle vp hente
And hem conforteth in ful goode entente
And sworen his oath as he was trewe knyght
He wolde soon so felfordthly his myght
Vpon the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke
That al the people of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he pt hadde his deth ful wel deserued
And right anoon ete outen mooze abood
His baner he displayeth and forth rood
To Thebesward and al his hoost biside
No neer Athenes wolde he go ne ride
Ne take his ese fully half a day
But ouerhaste on his wey that nyght he lay
And sente anon ypolita the queene
And Emelye hir yonge suster sheene
Vn to the toun of Athenes to dwelle
And forth he rit hem self ne mooze to telle
The fyr Statue of mars pt spere and targe
So shyneth in his white baner large
That alle the feldes glyteren vp and doun
And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche in which there was ybete
The wyf tauro which pt he slough in Crete
Thus rit this Duc thus rit this conquerour
And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour
Til pt he cam to Thebes and alighte
Faire in a feld there as he thoughte fighte
But shortly for to speken of this thyng
With Creon which pt was of Thebes kyng
He faught and slough hym manly as a knyght
In pleyn bataille and putte the folk to flyght
And by assaut he wan the Cite after
And rente adoun both the walle and sparre and rafter
And to the ladyes he restored again
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn
To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse
But it were al to longe for to deuyse

Thyght ·vi·

The grete dannoy/ and the lamentyinge
That the ladyes made/ at the bryinginge
Of the bodies/ and the grete honour
That Theseus/ the noble conqueroy
Dooth to the ladyes/ whan they from hym wente
But shortly for to telle/ as myn entente
Whan p^t this worthy Duc/ this Theseus
Hath slayn/ and borne Thebes thus
Stille in that feeld/ he took al nyght his reste
And did hym al the coutee/ as hym leste
To ransake in the tas/ of the bodyes dede
Hem for to strepe/ of harneys and of wede
The pilours/ diden busynesse and cure
After the bataille and Discomfiture
And so befel/ p^t in the tas they founde
Thurgh girt/ with many a grevous blody wounde
Two yonge knyghtes/ liggynge by and by
Both in oon armes/ wroght ful richely
Of whiche two/ Arcita highte that oon
And that other knyght/ highte Palamon
That fully quyke/ ne fully dede they were
But by hir cote armures/ and by hir gere
The heraudes/ knewe hem best in especial
As they p^t were/ of the blood royal
Of Thebes/ and of sustren two yborn
Out of the tas/ the pilours han hem torn
And han hem caried/ softe vn to the tente
Of Theseus/ and ful soone he hem sente
To Athenes/ to dwellen in prison
Perpetuelly/ he nolde no raunson
And whan this worthy Duc/ hath thus ydon
He took his hoost/ and hom he rood anon
With laurer crouned/ as a conquerour
And there he lyveth/ in joye and in honour
Terme of lyve/ what nedeth wordes mo
And in a tour/ in angwissh and in wo
This Palamon/ and his felawe Arcite
For evermoore/ ther may no gold hem quite
This passeth yeer by yeer/ and day by day
Til it fil oones in a morwe of may
That Emelye/ p^t fayre was to sene
Thanne is the lylie vpon his stalke grene
And fresscher than the may/ or floures newe
For or the rose colour/ strogh hire hewe
I noot/ which was the fyner of hem two
Er it were day/ as was hir wone to do
She was arisen/ and al redy dight
For may wol have no slogardie a nyght

Thy kny3ghtes

The ceson / prikeþ / euery3 gentil / herte
And maketh hym / out of his slep to sterte
And seith aryse / and do thy3n obseruance
This makes Emelye / haue remembraunce
To doon honour to may / and for to ryse
yclothed was she / fresshe for to deuyse
Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse
Byhynde hir bak / a yerde long I gesse
And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
She walketh vp and doun / and as hir liste
She gadereth flowres party / white and rede
To make a subtil gerland / for hir hede
And as an Angel / heuenysshly she soong
The grete toure / pt was so thikke and strong
Which of the castel / was the chief dongeon
There as the kny3ghtes / weren in prison
Of which I tolde yow / and telle shal
Was euene ioynant / to the gardyn wal
There as this Emelye / had hir pleyynge
Bright was the sonne / & clere that morweninge
And this Palamon / this woful prisoner
As was his wone / by leue of his gayler
Was risen / and romed / in a chambre an heigh
In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches grene
There as this fresshe Emelye the shene
Was in hir walk / and romed vp and doun
This sorweful prisoner / this Palamon
Goth in the chambre / romynge to and fro
And to hym self / compleynynge of his wo
That he was born / ful ofte he seyde alas
And so bifel / by auenture or cas
That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
Of yren / greet and square as any sparre
He caste his eye / vp on Emelya
And therwith al he bleynte and cryde. A.
As though he stongen were / vn to the herte
And with that cry / Arcite anon vp sterte
And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
That art so pale / and deedly on to see
Why criedestow / who hath thee doon offence
For goddes love / taak al in pacience
Oure prison / for it may noon other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs this aduersitee
Som wikke aspect / or disposicion
Of Saturne / by som constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this / al though we hadde it sworn
So stood the heuene / whan pt we were born

Thyght

Me moste endure this is the short and playn
This Palamon answerde and seyde agayn
Cosyn for sothe of this opynyon
Thow hast a veyn ymagynacion
This prison caused me nat for to crye
But I was hurt right now thurgh out myn eye
In to myn herte that wol my bane be
The fairnesse of that lady pt I see
Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro
Is cause of al my crying and my wo
I noot whether she be woman or goddesse
But Venus is it soothly as I gesse
And therwith al on knees doun he fil
And seyde Venus if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure
Before me sorweful wrecche creature
Out of this prison help pt we may scapen
And if so be my destynee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prison
Of oure lynage have som compassion
That is so low ybrought by tyrannye
And therwith that word Arcite gan espye
Where as this lady romed to and fro
And eft that sighte her beautee hurte hym so
That if that Palamon was wounded sore
Arcite is hurt as muche as he or more
And eft a sigh he seyde pitously
The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hym that rometh in the yonder place
And but I have his mercy and his grace
That I may seen hym atte leeste weye
I nam but deed there is nat moore to seye
This Palamon whan he the word herde
Dispitously he looked and answerde
Wheither sey stoode this in ernest or in pley
Nay quod Arcite in ernest by my fey
God helpe me so me list ful yvele pleye
This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye
It nere quod he to thee no gret honour
For to be false ne for to be traytour
To me pt am thy cosyn and thy brother
Ysworn ful depe and ech of us til oother
That nevere for to dyen in the peyne
Til pt deeth departe shal us tweyne
Neither of us in love to hyndre oother
Ne in non oother cas my leeve brother
But pt thou sholdest trewely forthren me
In evere cas as I shal forthren thee

This was thyn ooth and myn also certeyn
I koot wyght wel thou wyst it nat amyssen
Thus artow of my counsel out of doute
And nowe thow woldest falsly been aboute
To love my lady whom I love and serve
And ever shal til pt myn herte sterve
Wher thes false Arcite thow shalt nat so
I loved hir first and telle thee my wo
As to my conseil and to my brotherhe owen
To forthre me as I have told biforn
For which thou art ybounden as a knyght
To helpen me if it lay in thy myght
Or elles artow false I dar wel seyn
This Arcite ful proudly spak ageyn
Thow shalt quod he be ratheer false than I
And thou art false I telle thee outrely
For paramour I loved hir first er thow
What kistow seyn thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse
Thyn is affection of hoolynesse
And myn is love as to a creature
For which I telle thee myn aventure
As to my cosyn and my brotherhe owen
I pose that thow lovedest hir biforn
Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe
That who shal yeve a lovere any lawe
Love is a gretter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeve of any erthely man
And therfore positif lawe and swich decree
Is broken al day for love in ech degree
A man moot nedes love maugree his heed
He may nat flee it thogh he sholde be deed
Al be she mayde or wydwe or elles wyf
And eek it is nat likly al thy lyf
To stonden in hir grace namoore shal I
For wel thou wost thy selven verraily
That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly us gayneth no raunsoun
We stryven as dide the houndes for the boon
They foughte al day and yet hir part was noon
Ther came a kyte while they were so wrothe
And bar away the boon bitwixe hem bothe
And therfore at the kynges court my brother
Ech man for hymself ther is noon other
Love if thee list for I love and ay shal
And verraily my brother this is al
Here in this prisoun moote we endure
And everich of us take his aventure

Amen legem et iuramentum

The Knyghtes

Feet was the stryf and long bitwix yem tweyne
If that I hadde leyser for to seyne
But to theffect it happed on a day
To telle it yow as shortly as I may
A worthy Duc that highte Potheus
That felawe was to Duc Theseus
Syn thilke day that they were children lite
Was come to Atthenes his felawe to visite
And for to pleye as he was won to do
For in this world he loued no man so
And he loued hym as tendrely again
So wel they louede as olde bookes sayn
That whan pt oon was deed soothly to telle
His felawe wente and soughte hym doun in helle
But of that storie list me nat to write
Duc Potheus loued wel Arcite
And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yere
And finally at requeste and preyere
Of Potheus without any raunsoun
Duc Theseus hym leet out of prisoun
Frely to goon wher pt hym liste oon al
In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal
This was the forward pleynly for to write
Betwixen Theseus and hym Arcite
That if so were pt Arcite were yfounde
Ever in his lif by day or nyght or stounde
In any contree of this Theseus
And he were caught it was acorded thus
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed
Ther was noon other remedie ne reed
But taketh his leve and homward he him spedde
Let him who wayle his newe lif to wedde
Who sleeth now sorwe who suffreth now Arcite
Now sleeth he faileth thurgh his owene wyte
He wepeth wayleth cryeth pitously
To sleen hym self he wayteth pryvely
He seyde allas that day pt he was born
Now is my prison worse than biforn
Now is me woe eternally to dwelle
Nat in purgatorie but in helle
Allas pt ever knew I Potheus
For elles had I dwelled with Theseus
Yfetered in his prison evermo
Than had I been in blisse & nat in wo
Only the sighte of hire wer yow pt I serve
Though pt I never hire grace may deserve
Wolde hem suffise I nyght ynough for me
To walwe & wepe as Palamon wol he

Knyght

Thyn is the victorie of this auenture
ffull blissfully in prison maistow dure
In prison certes nay but in paradys
Wel hath ffortune ytumed thee the dys
That hast the sighte of hir and I thabsence
ffor possible is syn thou hast hir presence
And art a knyght a doughty and an able
That cow cas cynfortune is chaungeable
Thow maist to thy deslyr cow tyme attelyne
But I pt am exiled and baselyne
Of alle grace and in so greet dispeir
That they nys ethe water fyr ne eir
Ne creature pt of hem makes is
That may me helpe or doon confort in this
Wel oughte I deyne in darkenesse and distresse
ffay wel my lif my lyst and my gladnesse

Allas why pleynen folk so in comune
On purueiaunce of god or of ffortune
That yeueth hem ful ofte in many a tyde
Wel bettre than they kan hem self devyse
Som man desyreth for to han richesse
That cause is of his moerdre or greet sikenesse
And som man wolde out of his prison fayn
That in his hous is of his meynee slayn
Infinite harmes been in this matere
We knowen nat what we prayen here
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous
A dronke man woot wel pt he hath an hous
But he noot which the right is thider
And to a dronke man the wey is slider
And certes in this worlde so faren we
We seken faste after felicitee
But we goon often gronge ful often tirelly
Thus may we seyn alle and namely I
That knowe and hadde a greet opinioun
That out I myghte estaten from prisoun
Thanne hadde I been in ioye and parfit heele
That now I am exiled fro my wele
Syn pt I may nat seen you Emelye
I nam but dead there lyth no remedye

Vpon that cothey syde Palamon
Whan pt he knowe he was allone
Which sorwe he maketh pt the grete tour
Resouned of his yowling and clamour
The pure fetres on his shynes grete
Weren of his bittre salte teres wete
Allas quod he Arcita cosyn myn
Of al our stryf god woot the fruyt is thyn

Tuyssth ms

Thou walkest now in thedes at thy large
And of my wo/ thou yeuest litel charge
Thou mayst/ syn thou hast wisdom & manesse
Assemblen/ alle the folk/ of oure kynesse
And make a werre/ so shalt on this citee
That by som auenture/ or som tretee
Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf
For whom/ pt I moste nedes lese my lyf
For/ as by wey of possibilitee
Sith thou art at thy large/ of prison free
And art a lord/ gret is thyn auantage
Woore than is myn/ pt steme here in a cage
For I moot wepe/ and wayle pt I may
Pt al the wo/ pt prison may me yeue
And eek pt peyne/ pt loue me yeueth also
That doubleth/ al my torment/ and my wo
Therwith/ the fyr of jalousie vp steyte
Within/ me his brest/ and brenneth hi by the heyte
So hoolly/ that no lyk thing to wisolde
The goyting/ or the Assyrien dede and colde
Thanne dey de he/ o cruel goddes pt gouerne
This world/ pt byndyng of youre word eterne
And writen in the table of Athamaunt/
youre ylement/ and youre eterne graunt
What is mankynde/ moore vnto you holde
Than is the sheep/ pt wonyeth in the folde
For ay myn is man/ right as another beest/
And debateth eek/ in prison and arreest/
And hath siknesse/ and grete aduersitee
And ofte tymes/ giltles pasdee
What gouernance/ is in this prescience
That giltles/ tormenteth innocence
And yet encreesseth this/ al my turmente
That man is bounden to his obseruance
For goddes sake/ to letten of his wille
Ther as a beest/ may/ al his lust fulfille
And what a beest is dede/ he hath no peyne
But after his deeth/ man moot wepe and pleyne
Though in this world/ he have care and wo
Wyth outen doute/ it may stonden so
The auenture of this/ lete I to dyuynys
But wel I woot/ pt in this world grete pyne ys
Alias/ I se a serpent/ or a theef
That many a trewe man/ hath doon mescheef
Goon at his large/ and where hym lyst may tyme
But I moost been in prison thurgh Iunone
And eek thurgh Iuno/ Ialous and eek wood
That hath bereft me/ wel my al the blood

Knyght

Of Thebes Cite3 his waste walles wyde
And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde
ffor Ialousie and fere of hym Arcite
Nowe wol I stynte of Palamon a lite
And lete hym in his prisoun stille dwelle
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle
The sonne passeth and the nyghtes longe
Encreessen doubly wo the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner
I noot which hath the wofuller mester
ffor shortly for to seyn this Palamon
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun
In cheynes and in fetteres to been deed
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
ffor evermo as out of that contree
Ne nevere mo he shal his lady see
Now loveres axe I now this questioun
Who hath the worse Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day
But in prisoun he moot dwelle alway
That oother wher hym list may ride or go
But seen his lady shal he nevere mo
Now demeth as yow list ye that kan
ffor I wol telle forth as I bigan

Explicit prima pars

Sequitur pars secunda

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was
fful ofte a day he swelte and seyde alas
ffor seen his lady shal he nevere mo
And shortly to concluden al his wo
So muche sorwe hadde never creature
That is or shal whil pt the world may dure
His slep his mete his drynke is hym biraft
That lene he wexeth and drye as is a shaft
His eyen holwe and grisly to biholde
His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde
And solitarie he was and ever alone
And wailynge al the nyght making his mone
And if he herde song or instrument
Thanne wolde he wepe he myghte nat be stent
So feble eek every lyth and so lowe
And chaunged so that no man koude knowe
His speche nor his voys thogh men it herde
And in his geere for al the world he ferde

Thus
Mat oonly for the loues malady
Of Hercos but for-thy-lyk wanyng
Engendred of humour malencolik
Biforn his owene celle fantastik
And shortly tymes thas al yp-soun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of hym this knyght sone Daun Arcite
Mat wel dide / al day of his knighthede
Than he ennuyed hadde a yeer or two
This cruel torment and this peyne he dide
At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde
Upon a nyght in sleep as he hym leyde
Hym thoughte how that the winged god Mercurie
Biforn hym stood and bad hym to be murie
His slepy yerde in hond he bar yp-right
An hat he werede up his crispe heris bright
Arrayed was this god / as I took kep
As he was whan p^t Argus took his sleep
And seyde hym thus / to Athenes shaltou wende
Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende
And with that word / Arcite wook and sterte
Mook thenkely / how sore p^t me smerte
Quod he / to Athenes / right now mot I fare
Mee for the deth of deeth / shal I not spare
To se my lady / that I love and serue
In hir presence / recche I not to sterue
And right that word he caughte a gret mirour
And sauh / p^t chaunged was al his colour
And sauh his visage / al in another kynde
And right anon it ran him in his mynde
That sith his face / was so disfigured
Of malady the which he hadde endured
He myghte wel / if p^t he bar him lowe
Lyue in Athenes / euermoore vnknowe
And seen his lady / wel nyh day by day
And right anon / he chaunged his array
And clad him / as a poure laborer
And al alone / save oonly a squyer
That knew his privete / and al his cas
Which was disguised / pouerly as he was
To Athenes / is he goon the nexte way
And to the court / he came vp-on a day
And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
To drynge and drawe / what so men wol deuyse.
And shortly / of this matere for to seyn
He fil in office / with a chamberleyn
The which p^t dwelling was with Emelye
For he was wys / and koude sone espye

Knyght ¶

Of euery seruant which that seweth lyge
Hem fouste he herken whos and whatey bee
ffor he was yong and mygthty for the wones
And they to he was long and big of bones
To doon that any knight kan hym deuyse
A yeer or two he was in this seruyse
Page of the chambre of Eneshe the knyghte
And Philostrate he seyde pt he highte
But half ocultel yhouned a man as he
Ne was they nevere in court of his degree
He was so gentil of condicion
That thyghout al the court was his renon
They seyden that it were a shame
That Theseus shulde enhaunsen his degree
And putten hym in honourable seruyse
Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise
And thus with-inne a shorte child his name is sprongе
Goth of his deedes and his goode tonge
That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
That of his chambre he made hym a Squier
And gaf hym gold to maynteine his degree
And eek wel myghte hym out of his contree
ffrom yeer to yeer ful privyely his rente
But honestly and slyly he it spente
That no man wondred how pt he it hadde
And thus yeer in this wise his lif he ladde
And bar hym so in pees and eek in werre
Ther was no man pt Theseus hath derre
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite
And eke I shole of Palamon alite
In derknesse and horrible and strong prison
Thise seuen yeer hath seten Palamon
Forpyned what for wo and for distresse
Who feeleth double sorwe and heuynesse
But Palamon that loue destreyneth so
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly noght oonly for a yeer
Who koude ryme in englyssh propurely
His martirdom for sothe it am nat I.
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may
It fel that in the seuenthe yeer in May
The thridde myght as olde bookes seyn
That al this storie tellen more pleyn
Were it by auenture or destynee
As whan a thyng is shapen it shal be
That soone after the myghty Palamon
By helpyng of a frend brak his prison

Thyrdde

And fleeth the Citee faste as he may go
ffor he hadde yeue his gayley Rayke so
Of a Clawe maad of a Tewteyn Ryn
Of Nerwotikes and Opie of Thebes fyn
That al that nyght thogh pt men Rolde hi shake
This gayley sleep he nyghte nat awake
And thus he fleeth as faste as euer he may
The nyght was short and faste by the day
That nedes cost he moot hym selven hyde
And til a greue faste they bisyde
Et diepeful foot thanne stalketh Palamon
ffor shortly this was his opinion
That in that greue he Rolde hym hyde al day
And in the nyght thanne Rolde he take his way
To Thebes ward his freendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe hym to weye
And shortly outhey he Rolde lese his lif
Or Emelye Emelye vn to his wyf
This is theffect and his entente pleyn
Wrolk Rol I tunne to Arcite ageyn
That sitel Rirste hath my pt was his care
Ill pt fortune has brought hi in the snare .
The bisy lyke messagey of day
Saluweth in hir song the morwe gray
And fyry phebus ryseth vp so bright
That al the Orient laugheth of the light
And with his stremes dryeth in the greues
The siluey dropes hangynge on the leues
And Arcita that is in the court Royal
With Theseus his Squyer principal
Is risen and looketh on the myry day
And for to doon his obseruaunce to may
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desyr
He on a Coursey starlynge as the fyr
Is risen in to the feeldes hym to pleye
Out of the court were it a myle or tweye
And to the greue of which pt I yow tolde
By auenture his Cay he gan to holde
To maken hym a gerland of the greues
Were it of Rosebyndes or hawethornen leues
And lowde he song ayeyn the sonne shene
May Et alle thy flowres and thy greue
Welcome be thou faire fresshe may
In hope pt I som grene gete may
And forth his Courser with a lusty herte
Vp to a greue ful hastily he sterte
And in a path he romeeth vp and down
Ther as by auenture this Palamon

Thyght

Was m a busshe / that no man myghte hym se
ffor bowe aferd of his beeth / thamme was he
Also thyng me thenk so / that it was Ayate
God woot / he wolde hamo torken it ful lite
But sooth is seyd go sithen many yeres
That feele hath eyen and the blode hath eres
It is ful fair / a man to bere hym evene
ffor al day / meeteth men at vnset steuene
fful litel woot Ayate of his felawe
That was so ny / to herknen al his sawe
ffor in the busshe he sitteth now ful stille
Whan pt Arcite hadde songes al his fille
And songen al the roundel lustily
In to a studie / he fil al sodeynly
As doon thise lovers in hir queynte geres
Now in the crop / now doun in the breres
Now up / now doun / as boket in a welle
Right as the fortune / soothly for to telle
Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
Right so can geery venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk / right as hir day
Is gereful / right so chaungeth she array
Selde is the frday / al the wyke ylike
Whan pt Arcite has songe he gan to sike
And sette his yen doun / ful ofte eft and ofte
Alas quod he / that day pt I was bore
How longe Juno thurgh thy cruelte
Woltow werreyen Thebes the Cite
Alas / ybrogt is to confusion
The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphion
Of Cadmus / which pt was the firste man
That Thebes bulte / or first the toun bigan
And of the Cite / first was crouned kyng
Of his lynage am I / and his of al hys spryng
Hir veray ligne / as of the stok roial
And now am I so caytif and so thral
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serve hym / as his squyer pourely
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame
ffor I day nogt bikenne myn owene name
But they as I was wont to highte Arcite
Now highte I Philostrate nogt worth a myte
Alas thou felle Mars / alas Juno
Thus hath your ire our kynrede al fordo
Save oonly me and wrecched Palamon
That Theseus martyreth in prison
And over al this / to sleen me outrely
Love hath his fyry dart so brennyngly

Cadmus

Ystikes thurgh myn herte carefull heyte
That shapen was my deeth eyst than myn oother
Ye sleen me with youre eyen Emelye
Ye been the cause wherfore I dye
Of al the remenant of myn oother care
Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare
So I koude doon aught to youre plesance
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A longe tyme and after he up steyte
This Palamon I thought thurgh his heyte
He felte a cold swerd ech deynt liche glyde
For ire he quook no lenger wolde he byde
And whan I he had herd Arcites tale
As he were wood with face deed and pale
He stirte him up out of the bussches thikke
And cride Arcite falsly traytour wikke
Now artow hent that lovest my lady so
For whom I have al this peyne and wo
And art my blood and to my conseil sworn
As I ful ofte have told thee heer biforn
And hast bijaped heere Duc Theseus
And falsly changed hast thy name thus
I shal be deed or elles thou shalt dye
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye
But I shal love hir oonly and nat no
For I am Palamon thy mortal foo
And though I no wepne have in this place
But out of prison am astert by grace
I drede nought I that oother thow shalt dye
Or thow ne shalt nat love Emelye
Chees which thou wolt or thou shalt nat asterte
This Arcite with ful despitous herte
Whan he him knew and hadde his tale herd
As fiers as leon pulled out his swerd
And cryde thus by god I it shal abye
Arcite it I that thou art or nat and shoon for love
And eek I that thow no wepne hast in this place
Thou shalt nat scape out of this grete place
That thou ne shalt dyen of myn hond
For I defye the conseil and the bond
Which that thou seist I have made to thee
What verray fool thynk shal I that love is free
And I shal love hir maugree al thy myght
But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght
And wilnest to darreyne hir by bataille
Have heer my trouthe tomorwe I shal nat faille
Withouten witing of any oother wight
That here I shal be founden as a knyght

And bryngen hameys ryght ynough for thee
And chese the beste / and leue the woorste for me
And mete and drynke this nyght wol I bryng
ynough for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng
And if so be / that thou my lady wynne
And ete me in this wode they I shrynne
Thoo may ist wel by thy lady / as for me
This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee
And thus they been departed / til amorwe
Whan ech of hem / has leyd his feith to borwe
Out of the / out of alle chartre
O pegrie pt wost no festes have ther thee
Ful sooth is seyd / pt loue ne lordshipe
Wol nought / his thankes have no felawshipe
Wel fynden that / Arcite and Palamon
Arcite is riden anon / vn to the toun
And on the morwe / er it were dayes light
Ful pryuely / two harneys hath he dight
Bothe suffisaunt / and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne
And on his hors / allone as he was born
He carieth / al the harneys him biforn
And in the grove / at tyme and place yset
This Arcite / and this Palamon ben met
To chalengen / gan the colour in his face
Right as the hunters / in the regne of Trace
That stondeth at the gappe / with a spere
Whan hunted is / the leon and the bere
And hereth hym / come russhyng / in the greues
And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
And thynketh / here wil / my mortal enemy
Without faille / he moot be dede / or I
For outher I / moot slen hym at the gappe
Or he moot slen me / if pt me myshappe
So fersly they / in chalengyng / of hir heste
As fer as euereh of hem oother smyte
Ther was no good day ne no saliryng
But streight / with outen word / or rekenyng
Euereh of hem / heelp for to armen oother
As freendly / as he were his owene brother
And after that / with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen ech at oother / egerly longe
Thou myghtest wene / that this Palamon
In his fightyng / were a wood leon
And as a cruel Tigre was Arcite
As wilde boores / gonne they to smyte
That frothen white as foom / for ire wood
Up to the ancles / foghte they in hir blood

Knyght

Thus in this wise lete hem fightyng dwelle
And forth I pole of Theseus york telle
The Duc that executeth in the lordis al
The purueiaunce that god hath seyn bifor
So stiong it is pt though the lordis has skorn
The contiaie of a thyng by ye or nay
yet countynue it shal fallen on a day
That fallith nat eft ne pt thousands yeere
ffor certeinly our appetites heere
Be it of pees or werre or hate or loue
Al is this ruled by the sighte aboue
This mene I now by myghty Theseus
That for to hunten is so desirus
And namely at the grete hert in may
That in his bed there day ne thynketh hym no day
That he nys clad and redy for to ryde
With hunte and hornes and houndes hym besyde
ffor in his huntyng hath he swich delit
That it is al his ioye and appetit
To been hym self the grete hertes bane
ffor after may he rekketh nowt to dyne
Ne many day as I have told er this
And Theseus with alle ioye and blis
With his ypolita the faire queene
And Emelye clothed al in grene
On huntyng be they riden royally
And to the grove that stood ful faste by
In which they was an hert as men hym tolde
Duc Theseus the streighte way hath holde
And to the launde he ridith hym ful right
ffor thider was the hert wont haue his flight
And over a brook and so forth in his weye
This Duc hol hath a cours at hym or tweye
With houndes swiche as hym list comaunde
And whan this Duc was come vn to the launde
Under the sonne he looketh and anon
he was war of Arcite and Palamon
That fought ful bremne as it were boores two
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously that with the leeste stroke
It semed as it wolde felle an oke
But what they were no thyng he ne woot
This Duc his cours wt his ores smoot
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two
And pulled out a swerd and cride hoo
Maugre vp on peyne of lesyng of youre heed
By mygthy may he shal anon be deed

What cuyteth any ſhoot · that q may seen
But telleth me what myſtieys men ye been
That been so hardy for to fighten heere
Within oure cyte and oothey officeys
As it here in a lystes ryally
This Palamon answerde hastily
And seyde sire that nedeth wordes mo
We haue the deeth deſerued bothe two
Two woful wrecches been we two caytyues
That been encombred of oure owene lyues
And as thou art a rightful lord and Juge
Ne yeue vs neither mercy no refuge
But slee me first for seinte charitee
But slee myn felawe eek as wel as me
Or slee hym first · for though thou knowest it lite
This is myn mortal foo this is Arcite
That fro thy lond is banyſſhed on his heed
For which he hath deſerued to be deed
For this is he that cam vn to thy gate
And seyde that he highte Philostrate
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yer
And thou hast maked hym thy chief Squier
And this is he that loueth Emelye
For sith the day is come that I shal dye
I make pleynly myn confession
That I am thilke woful Palamon
That hath thy prison broken wikkedly
I am thy mortal foo and it am I
That loueth so hoote Emelye the bryghte
That I wol dye present vn hir sighte
Wherfore I aye deeth and myn Juyſſe
But slee myn felawe vn the same wyſe
For bothe han we deſerued to be slayn
This worthy Duc answerde anon agayn
And seyde this is a short conclusion
Youre owene mouth by youre confession
Hath damned you and I wol it recorde
It nedeth nought to pyne you on the corde
Ye shal be deed by myghty mayn the yonge
This queene anon for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe and so dide Emelye
And alle the ladyes in the compaignye
Greet pitee was it as it thoughte hem alle
That euer swich a chaunce shulde falle
For gentil men they were of greet estaat
And no thyng but for loue was this debaat
And saugh hir bloody woundes wyde and sore
And alle cryeden both lasse and more

Troylus

Haue mercy lord vp on vs wommen alle
And on hir base knees adoun they falle
And clolde haue kist his feet they as she stood
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood
ffor pitee renneth soone in gentil herte
And though he first for ire quook and sterte
He hath considered shortly in a throwe
The trespas of hem bothe and eek the cause
And although pt his ire hir gilt accused
yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused
As thus he thoghte wel pt euery man
Wol helpe hymself in loue if that he kan
And eek deliuer hymself out of prison
And eek his herte hadde compassion
Of wommen for they sorwen euere in oon
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon
And softe vnto hymself he seyde fy
Vp on a lord that wol haue no mercy
But been a leon bothe in word and deede
To hem pt been in repentaunce and drede
As wel as to a proud despitous man
That wol maynteine that he first bigan
That lord hath litel of discrecion
That in an hour al kan not remembre on
That rekketh nought pryde and humblesse afterr oon
And shortly when his ire is thus agoon
He gan to loken vp with eyen lighte
And thoughte this stronge lordes alle on highte
The god of loue a benedicite
How myghty and how great a lord is he
Ayeynes his myght they gayneth none obstacles
He may be cleped a god for his miracles
ffor he kan maken at his owene gyse
Of euerich herte as pt hym list deuyse
Lo heere this Arcite and this Palamon
That quitly weren out of my prison
And myghte haue lyued in Thebes roialy
And witen I am hir mortal enemy
And pt hir deth lith in my myght also
And yet hath loue maugree hir eyen two
Withoute hem hyder bothe for to fyghte
Wel looketh it nat that an heigh folye
Who may been a fool but if he loue
Bihoold for goddes sake pt sit aboue
Se how they bleede be they noght wel arayed
Thus hath hir lord the god of loue ypayed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir seruyse
And yet they weenen for to been ful wyse

Note diu

That oenen love / for aught that may bifalle
But this is yet the beste game of alle
That ose / for whom they han this jolitee
Kan hem they fore / as muche thank as me
Ose woot nat moore / of al this hoote fare
By god / than woot a cokkow of an hare
But al moot been a-shaye / hoot and cold /
A man moot been a fool / or yong / or old /
I woot it by my self / ful yore agon
For in my tyme a servant was I oon
And therfore syn I knowe of loues peyne
And woot how sore it kan a man distreyne
As he / pt hath been caught ofte in his lawe
I yeve forgyue / al hoolly this trespas
At requeste of the queene / pt kneleth heere
And eek of Emelye / my suster deere
And ye shul bothe anon unto me seke
That neede no / ye shal my grace leke
Ne make excuse / vp on me myghte ne day
But been my fleendes / in al that ye may
I yeve forgyue / this trespas every deel
And they hym woxen / his auowing faire and weel
And syn of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
And he hem graunteth grace / and thus he seyde
To speke / of roial lynage and richesse
Though pt she were a queene or a princesse
Eek of you bothe / is wortheth vouteles
For gentilesse / and fortune from above
Unwemmed / as of man / is yeven by god
Right so as wisdom / is not biqueth or rod
Thanne may men by discent / nat purchasen
The reaume / or lordshipes / but god hem sende
Of his grace / and whan he saw his time
He sente his sone / into this erthe adoun
Into the wombe / of a virgine mayden
As it is wroght / and why / it is for neden
For mannes norissing / and his livinge
And whan a man / hath multiplied his kinde
A thousand yeer / as we in bookes finde
Ful nyce and proude / and lecherous was he
That firste mighte / two thinges parten fro three
But for no man / desireth to been a knave
For cleernesse / of his owne gentilesse
Ful many a gentil man / were / or sholde been
Lyve thanne / as his worthy eldres diden
And folwe his wise / and hire vertues sewe
Til fortune / wolde hem fro hir whele threwe
And thogh he stonde / in regal magestee
Thanne is he but a wrecche / in honde of me
For gentilesse / nat of possessioun
Clymbeth to no wight / in discencioun
For heere we clymben / alle for to descende
Thogh we dispenden / florins as we wende
A man is noght / the more noble / ywis
For vertueles / his auncestre was
And he that wole / han pris of his gentrye
For freendes love / and nat for his desert
Of alle his eldres / for the vertuous lyf
That they han led / bifore / and for the grace
Of god / that bad hem for to been hise
And hem from synne / wolde chastised and chaste
For unto god / right swich a lord is he
As is a fader / to a child / that is his fre
He wole be dred / and loved / as his child
Lo / heere what seith / the wise king daun Claude
Lo / heere what seith / the wise king daun Claude
Was nat a man / al be he poure of kynde
Wel can the wise poete of florence
That highte dant / speke in this sentence
Lo / in swich manere / rym is dant / I make
Ful selde / up ryseth / by his braunches make
An oke / that cometh / of a fyn or hasel
For god / wot / that in this / I trowe wel
Men may wel / by the roote / the vertue deme
Than is the roote / of mannes / myght and name
But man / that hopeth / or desireth / of the
Thise fyue / poynten / that I have / rekened the
Nobilitee / of auncestre / or richesse
Of straunge / vertues / or of beautee
Wisdom / or curteisye / or debonairetee
That man / desireth / in wommen / for bountee
Wel / nyghe / alle thise / fyue / poynten / hadde she
That / as hem thoughte / myghte / hir suffise
To been / a noble / duchesse / and a wyf
And forthermore / it is my fulle entente
That noon of you / hir honour / shal repente
For I shal / peyne me / by weye and strete
To maken / hir / contente / with al my wit
And sith / I am / a knight / I wil / nat lye
Ne wil / my trouthe / for no man / falsifye
Ne / for no love / that ever / of me shal take
Ne / for no man / my trouthe / shal I forsake
Til that / my soule / out of my body / go
I yeve it / yow / right heere / my trouthe / and ho
Ne / be I nat / of Arcite / thus I mene
For love / to yow / right as I dide / bifore
For which / I putte / my lyf / in jupartye
For yow / right heere / as valyant knight / as he
And lat see now / which of yow / two is best
And preye / I yow / my sister / sweete / leeve
Al be I lothe / yow / shal nat me greve
But I wil / have / hir / wholly / for my wyf
Right as / hir / list / as maiden / of hir lyf
Ne / wil I nat / constreyne / hir / for to take
Noon / of you / two / by force / for my make
But in / a fyre / and by / hir / free assent
For if / I / wolde / enforce / hir / for to assent
Than / were / she / worthy / lightly / for to lese
Hir / name / and / I / to been / a / traytour / lese
And / shortly / I / wil / love / hir / ever / and serve
And / forthermore / but / if / ye / wole / me / carve
Ne / wil / I / nat / han / hir / but / right / as / hir / grace
But / seeth / hir / first / and / lat / hir / of / you / chese
Whether / it / be / me / or / noon / or / which / of / you
For / as / she / wole / I / wil / nat / hir / eschue
And / certes / I / wil / nat / counterplete / yow
Arcite / in / this / case / ne / anon / Palamon
This / is / my / finale / answere / lo / right / heere
Now / al / is / this / for / pees / and / concluded / is
Ther / is / no / more / to / seye / but / as / I / seye
If / that / you / liketh / take / it / for / the / beste
That / everich / of / you / shal / goon / where / hym / leste
Freely / with / outen / raunsoun / or / daunger
And / this / day / fifty / wykes / fer / ne / ner
Everich / of / you / shal / bringe / an / hundred / knyghtes
Armed / for / lystes / up / at / alle / rightes

Knyght ¶

Trewely to sayen hyre myn bataille
And this bihote I yow with outen faille
Upon myn trouthe / and as I am a knyght
That ther̄ither of yow bothe yt hath myght
This is to seyn / that ther̄ither he or thow
Wyn̄ yt his hondes / as I spak of now
Out of this contree / or out of lyftes dyne
Thanne shal I yeue Emelya to wyne
To whom yt fortune / yeueth so fayr a grace
Tho lyftes / shal I maken in this place
And god so wisly on my soule rewe
As I shal evene Iuge been and trewe
Ye shul noon oother ende ther̄ to maken
That oon of yow / ne shal be dees or taken
And if yow thynketh / this is wel ystyd
Seyeth yowre avys / and holdeth yow alwayes
This is yowre ende / and yowre conclusion
Tho looketh lightly now / but Palamon
Tho gryngeth up for ioye / but Arcite
Tho fouthe telle / or tho fouthe endite
The ioye / yt is makes in the place
Whan Theseus / hath doon so fayr a grace
But doun on knees / wente every knyght
And thonken hym / ther̄ al hir herte and myght
And namely the Thebans often sithe
And thus with good hope / and ther̄ herte blithe
They taken hir leve / and homward gonne they ryde
To Thebes with his olde walles wyde

¶ Explicit secunda pars ¶

¶ Sequit̄ pars tercia ¶

I trowe men wolde deme it negligence
If I foryete / to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus / that goth so busily
To maken up / the lystes rialy
That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
I dar wel seyn / in this world they nas
The kynges / a mylle was about
Walles of stoon / and dyches al with oute
Round was the shap / in maner of compas
Full of degrees / the heighte of sixty pas
That whan a man / was set / on o degree
He letteth nat / his felawe for to see
Estward / they stod a gate of marbul whit
Westward right swich another in the opposit

And shortly to conclusen / of which a place
Was noon in eyther as in so litel space
For in the lond ther was no crafty man
That geometrie / or Ars aymetik kan
Ne portreto[ur] ne kervere of ymages
That Theseus / ne yaf mete and wages
The theatre / for to maken and devyse
And for to doon his ryte and sacrifise
He eftsoons hath vpon the gate above
In worshyp of Venus goddesse of love
Doon make an Auter / and an Oratorie
And on the walles in memorie
Of ymage he makes hath right wel another
That coste largely / of gold a fother
And cloothed[d] in a Tonycle / on the wal
Of alabastre whit / and reed coral
An Oratorie riche for to see
In worship of Dyane of chastitee
Hath Theseus doon wroght in noble wyse
But yet / hadde I foryeten to devyse
The noble kervyng / and the portreitures
The shap / the contenaunce and the figures
That weren in thise Oratories thre
First / in the temple of Venus / may ye se
Wroght on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
The broken sleves / and the sikes colde
The sacred teres / and the compleyninge
The fyry strokes / and the desyringe
That lovers wenden / in this lyf endure
The othes / that hir covenantz assure
Plesaunce and hope / desyr / foolhardynesse
Beautee and youthe / baudrye richesse
Chaunce and force / lesynges flaterye
Despense / bisynesse and jalousye
That hadde of yelewe goolden a gerland
And a cokkow sittynge on hir hand
Festes / instrumentz / caroles daunces
Lust and array / and alle the circumstances
Of love / which[ch] pl[ur] rekned shal ne reken shal
Whyl ye / were peynted on the wal
And mo / than I kan make of mencion
For sothly / al the mount of Citheron
There Venus / hath hir principal dwellynge
Was shewed on the wal / in portreyynge
With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse
That was forgeten / the porter ydelnesse
Narcisus the fayre / of yore agon
And yet / the folye / of kyng Salomon

Knyght

And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules
Thenchauntementz of Medea and Circes
Me of Tiresias eek the hardy fleys corage
The riche Cresus kaytyf in seruage
Thus may ye seen pt Fortune ne nobelesse
Beautee ne slenghte strengthe hardynesse
Ne may with Venus holde champartie
ffor as hir list the lyfte may she gye
lo alle thise folk so caught ek in hir las
Til they for ful ofte pleyde allas
Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two
And though I koude rekene a thousand mo
The statue of Venus glorious for to se
Was naked fletynge in the large see
And fro the navele doun al covered was
Ful clere lakes grene and brighte as any glas
A citole in hir right hand hadde she
And on hir heed ful semely for to se
A rose gerland fresh and wel smellynge
Above hir heed hir doves flikerynge
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido
Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two
And blynd he was as it was often seene
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and keene
Why sholde I nought as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture that was upon the wal
Ful clene the temple of Mars armypotente
Al peynted was the wal in length and brede
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace
In thilke colde frosty region
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansion
First on the wal was peynted a forest
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best
With knotty knarry barevne trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough
And downward from an hille under a bente
Ther stood the temple of Mars armypotente
Wrought al of burned steel of which the entree
Was long and streit and gastly for to see
And therout came a rage and swich a vese
That it made al the gate for to rese
The northren light in at the dores shoon
For windowe on the wal ne was ther noon
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne
The dore was al of Adamant eterne

Ydeuches ouer thwart and endelong
With yren tough and for to make it strong
Euery pyler the temple to sustene
Was tonne greet of yren bright and shene
Thei caught first the vyce ymaginyng
Of felonye and the compassyng
The crueel ire lees as any gleede
The pykepurs and the pale drede
The enuyous with the knyf vnder the cloke
The shepne brennynge with the blake smoke
The tresoun of the murthrynge in the bedde
The open werre with woundes al bibledde
Contek with blody knyf and sharp manace
Al ful of chirkynge was that yrke place
The ydres of hymself yet laughe they
His herte blood hath bathed al his wey
The nayl ydrywen in the shode a nyght
The colde deth with mouth gapynge vpright
Amyddes of the temple sat meschaunce
With disconfort and sorwy countenaunce
Yet laugh wodnesse laughynge in his rage
Armes complement outrages and pryes outrage
The cartere in the buske with throte ytorne
A thousand slayn and nat oon of qualm ystorue
The tyraunt with the pray by force yraft
The toun destroyed there was no thyng laft
Yet laughe bremt the shippes hoppesteres
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres
The theef fleteth the child ryght in the chayer
The took ystabled for al his longe lyer
Nought was foryeten by the infortune of wyght
The tapyte ouer wyden with his knyte
Vnder the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun
They were also of wyntres diuision
The labrere and the potter and the smyth
That forgeth shaftes helpes on his styth
And al aboute depeynted in a tour
Laugh and tombesteff fightynge in great honour
With the shaftes helpe ouer his heed
Slaynge by a soutil compas thryes
Depeynted was the slaughtre of Iulius
Of grete Cesar and of Antonius
Al be that thilke tyme they were vnborn
Yet was hy deth depeynted there byforn
By ymaginyng of wyts ryght by figure
So was it shewed in thilke portreiture
As is depeynted in the estres aboue
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for loue

Thygistes

Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde
I may not rekene hem alle though I wolde
The statue of Mars up vp-on a carte stood
Armed and lokede grym as he were wood
And ouer his heed they shyneden two figures
Of sterres that been cleped in scriptures
That oon Puella that oother Tubeus
This god of Armes was arrayed thus
A wolf they stood biforn hym at his feet
With eyen rede and of a man he eet
With bookes pencel was depeynted this storie
In lowdoutynge of Mars and of his glorie
And to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As shortly as I kan I wole me haste
To telle yow al the descripsioun
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee
Ther-with I wol now crave of yow pitee
I-wis I pray to hem that kunne it make
If there be any rym or any metre
That they me helpe now fully for to seye
But I biseke yow of your curteisye
Yee myghte han pitee and han som mercy
And my defaute nat imputeth vnto vileynye
For curious I nam nat certeyn
My wit is rude and excuse me fayn
Now wol I turne to my first matere
Ther stoden tentes many a riche and fere
Ful of knyghthod and of heigh prowesse
For certes fayn they wolden hem dresse
Ful lowe in honour of hire lady dere
The noble hunteresse the quene Dyane
Hir moste desir was to be chaast and pure
And eke to folwe hir vertuous desport
And noght to been a wyf ne han a make
But evere lyve mayden in wilderness
As doth the fresshe rede floures rede
Hir lust was in the forest to abyde
As doth the tendre crop-ful of the breere
That is of vertu hoote and debonaire
Ful bisy was she cheldren for to save
That evere to hir for help and succour crave
Right as hir self is goddesse of childhede
Wel knew Calistopee that this mayde
Was verrey mayden stable and eke wys
And pitous and pleyn of gentilesse
For which she was ful hastily receyved
Into the route and took hir leve and weyved
Forth with Diane walkyng in the chace
This false wikked wery Jupiter
Thurgh his vertu and his wantoune desire
Which alle day men lyken to the fire
That evere brenneth and evere hath desyr
To brenne his verray kynde place entyre
For which anon he caste him how and how
Right as a lyon al the world wolde he
Him thoughte Love so brenneth in his herte
That he moste outen al his wikke smerte
Or dyen of the wo save he anon
Hadde of this mayden Calistopee anon
Allas fro whennes may thy folye arise
That thou wolt loven thyng that may not be
Wostow not wel that Jupiter is he
That hath a wyf al redy of his owene
Knowe al this thyng and hold it for bydene
That he nyl han non other love but here
Or if he do he shal anon forlete
Aught of his godhede or his regalye
Or that he be not Jupiter in certeyn
But nathelees al this ne may nat seye
Ne all the reson in the world ne may
Withdrawe a lovere from his wikke entente
Ne nothing make him to han hem penitente
Ne nothing may him from his lust arace
Til that the fruyt be fallen in the place
Wher-after that he longeth for to have
Now wol I stynten of this Jupiter to rave
And speken of Diane and of hir wayes
Hir yonge sone is fallen in the mayes
And pleyeth him with floures in the greene
Ther as ther come fro hunting many a queene
And nymphes rennyng in hir weye faste
Hir bowes bente hir arwes brighte and caste
Som in hir trays and some hir dartes kene
Were comen hom fro slen of wilde deere
Some comen fro the pley and some fro game
In swich manere as yow now alle kan name
And in this tyme Mercurius the quaynte
Hath of his wynges twayne no fether maynte
That he nas in a roche as blak as cole
And sadly lokede doun fro the pole
Ful lyk a corbyn or a ravenes fere
Whan they for mete wolden hem tere
And with his rodde that can make slepen
And wake folk whan him leste kepen
He hath the yonge Mercurie anon
And in his lappe full softely hath him layd
Wel knew he craft to wynnen love mede
For al the day he sleeth with his rode
Til that the nyght hath al the sky I-nome
Ful prively with his wynges coome
He is descended there he wolde be
This is the short and pleyn of the entente
Now is he there he wolde have his herte
Now wol I stynten of him a lytel sterte
And speken of Diane that hunteth faste
Til that the game is doun I-come at laste
Whan that the sonne gynneth down to wayne
Tho is she ware of Calistopee allone
Whan al hir folk was in a manere gone
And down she sitteth hir by in the grene
Ther-as she thoughte no man hir sene
And of hir game anon she gynneth hir to lere
And Calistopee ful redily gan hir here
Ful lowe agayn as it best hir semede
And of hir wordes eke she hir demede
Ful wisely and answerde hir right wel
Now wol I stynten of this Calistopee
And speken of Jupiter that can espye
Hir walkyng fro the castel al aboute
Ful many a myle and hath hir put in doute
Lest that Diane hath espyed hir
Ful many a day he hath compassed hir
Til on a day he cam hir ful nyghe
Ther-as she myghte nat hir wayes wighe
Ne fle away as she dide other whyle
Ful many a day er that she wolde hir wyle
Ful many a day she hadde hir eye on caste
Til on a day she wolde hir bathe faste
In a fayre clere and softe water
Ful lyk hir self and eke the somer hoote
Hir lyste wel to bathe hir in that place
Ther-to she hadde ful many a tyme grace
Ther-as she myghte hir bathe and hir solace
Ther nas no man that myghte hir there espye
Ne nothing that hir lyste nat to doone
Hir folk hadde leve to pleye hem and roone
Where hem lyste and hunte and goon in mede
Hir bowes bente and arwes sharpe and kene
Hir hunting spere and eke hir wagges grene
Hir dartes and hir trayes were hem by
Hir trousses and hir quyvers ful redy
Hir folk hadde doon hir coomly to abyde
Hir hunting gere and wente hir wayes ryde
Ful many a myle in the wode hem by
Ther nas no more but she and Calistopee
And she was war that Calistopee was with child
Ful wel she knew the craft and eke the wyle
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel espyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel aspyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-knowe
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-throwe
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-seyn
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-meyn
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-thought
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-sought
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-soght
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-wroght
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lyked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-syked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-pyked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-myked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-wayted
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-bayted
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-tryed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-spyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-aspyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-eyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-herkened
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-merkened
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-marked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-harked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-discerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-demed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-deemed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-yerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-knowe
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-throwe
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-seyn
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-meyn
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-thought
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-sought
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-soght
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-wroght
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lyked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-syked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-pyked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-myked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-wayted
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-bayted
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-tryed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-spyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-aspyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-eyed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-herkened
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-merkened
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-marked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-harked
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-discerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-demed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-deemed
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-yerned
Ful many a day she hadde hir wel I-lerned

Wel couthe he peynten lyfly / that it wrogte
With many a floryn / he the hedes bogte
And been the lystes maad / and Theseus
That at his grete cost / arrayed thus
The temples / and the theatre euery deel
Whan it was don / hym lyked wonder wel
But stynte I wole / of Theseus a lite
And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
The day approcheth / of his weddynge
That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes bringe
The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde
And til Athenes / his couenantz for to holde
Hath euerich of hem / broght an hundred knyghtes
Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes
And certeynly / they thynken many a man
That neuer sithen / that the world began
As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond
As fer / as god hath maked see or lond
Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye
For euery wight / that louede chyualrye
And wolde his thankes / han a parfit name
Hath preyed / pt he myghte been of that game
And wel was hym / that therto chosen was
For if they fille to werke swich a cas
Ye knowen wel / pt euery lusty knyght
That loueth paramours / and hath his myght
Were it in engelond / or elles where
They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
To fighte for a lady / benedicite
It were a lusty sighte / for to see
And right so fersly / they therken Palamon
Wt hym / they wenten knyghtes many on
Som wol ben armed / in an habergeon
And in a brestplate / and in a light gypon
And some wolin haue / a paire plates large
And some wolin haue / a paire of cheeld or a targe
Some wolin ben armed / on hir legges wel
And haue an ax / and some a mace of steel
Ther is no newe gyse / that it nas old
Armes wern they / as I haue yow told
Euerych after his opinion
Ther maistow seen / comynge wt Palamon
Lygurge hym self / the grete kyng of Trace
Blak was his berd / and manly was his face
The cercles of his eyen in his hed
They gloweden / bitwixen yelow and red
And like a grisly / lokede he aboute
With kempe heeris / on his browes stoute

Knyghtes

Hise lymes grete/ hise bakkes hade and stronge
Hise shuldres brode/ hise armes rounde and longe
And as the gyse was in his contree
Ful shyre/ upon a chaar of gold stood he
With foure white boles in the traas
In stede of cote armure/ ov his harnays
With nayles yelewe/ and bryghte as any gold
He hadde a bevres skyn/ colblak/ for old
His longe heer was kembd bihynde his bak
As any ravenes fethere/ it shoon for blak/
A wrethe of gold arm greet/ of huge strengthe
Upon his heed/ set ful of stones brighte
Of fyne rubyes/ and of dyamaunts
Aboute his chaar/ ther were wel fyfty tauntz
Of twenty and mo/ as grete as any stoon
To hunten at the leon or other deer
And folwed hym/ with mosel faste ybounde
Colres of gold/ and torets fyled rounde
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel/ with hertes stierne and stoute
With arwes/ and stones as men fynde
The grete emetrius/ the king of inde
Upon a stede bay/ trapped in steel
Covered in cloth of gold/ dyapred wel
Cam ridynge/ lyk the god of armes mars
His cote armure was of cloth of tars
Couched with perles/ white and rounde & grete
His saddel was of brend gold newe ybete
A mantel/ upon his shulder hangynge
Bret ful of rubyes rede/ as fyr sparklynge
His crispe heer/ lyk wyres was ronne
And that was yelow/ and glyteryng as the sonne
His nose was heigh/ his eyen bright citryn
His lippes rounde/ his colour was corvyn
A fewe freknes in his face ysprynkled
Bitwixen yelow/ and somdel blak ymedled
And as a leon he his lookynge caste
Of fyve and twenty yeer/ his age I caste
His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge
His voys/ was as a trompe thondrynge
Upon his heed/ he wered of laurer grene
A gerland/ freshe/ and lusty for to sene
Upon his hand/ he bar for his desduyt
An egle tame/ as any lilie whyt
An hundred lordes/ hadde he with hym there
Al armed save hir hedes/ in al hir gere
Ful richely/ in alle maner thynges
For trusteth wel/ pt dukes/ erles kynges

Thy3ght 11

These gadeyes / ni this noble compaignye
ffor loue / And for enuees of thinalsye
Aboute this kyng / thei / han on eueyy part /
ffull many a tame leon / and leopard
And ni this wise / thise lordes alle and some
Been on the Sondai3 / to the Citee come
Aboute prime / and ni the toun alight /
This Theseus / this Duc / this worthy kny3ght
Whan he had bro3ght hem / ni to his Citee
And inned hem / euerich in his degree
He festeth hem / and doth hem gret labour
To esen hem / and don hem al honour
That yet men weneth / pt no mannes wit
Of noon estat / ne koude amenden it
The wy3nes / the seruice / at the feeste
The gret yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
The riche array / of Theseus paleys
Ne who sat / first ne last / ne on the deys
What ladyes fairest been / or best daunsynge
Or which of hem / kan daunce best and synge
Ne who most felyngly / speketh of loue
What hankes / sitten on the perche above
What houndes / liggen in the floor adoun
Of al this / make I nowe no mencioun
But al theffect / that thynketh me the beste
Now cometh the point / and herkneth if yow leste
The Sonday ny3ght er day bigan to sprynge
Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
Al though it nere nat day / by houres two
yet song the larke / and Palamon also
With hooly herte / and with an heigh corage
he roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
Vn to the blisful Citherea benigne
I mene Venus / honurable and digne
And in hir hous / he walketh forth a pas
Vn to the gates / there hys —— temple was
And doun he knelith / with ful humble cheere
And herte / and seyde in this manere
Fayreste of faire / o lady myn Venus
Doughter to Ioue / and Spouse of Vulcanus
Thow glader / of the mount / of Citheron
ffor thilke loue / thow hadde[st] to Adon
Haue pitee / of my bitter teres smerte
And take myn humble preyere at thyn herte
Alas / I ne kan / ne may the peyne nat telle
That feele[th] so thirle / myn herte / that I crye
Ne I ne kan / for verray wo / out brynge
The wordes / that I wolde to thee synge
I am so confus / that I kan nought seye

The preyere of palamon
to venus goddesse of loue

¶ Thyrdde

But thou lady bryght that knowest creele
Wyl thought and seest what harmes pt I feele
Consydre al this and recke vpon my sorge
As wysly as I shal for euere more
Ensforth my myght thy trewe seruant be
And holden werre alkey with chastitee
That make I myn auow do ye me helpe
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe
Me I ne axe nat to conquere to haue victorie
Me renoun in this cas ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blosten vp and down
But I wolde haue fully possessioun
Of Emelye and dye in thy seruyse
Fynd thow the manere how that I may
I recche nat but it may bettre be
To haue victorie of hem or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myne armes
For though so be that mars is god of armes
Your vertu is so great in heuene above
That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
Thy temple wol I worshipe eueremo
And on thyn autey wil I sacrifice and make
And do my sacrifice and fyres bete
And if ye wol nat so my lady sweete
Thanne preye I thee tomorwe with a speere
That I atteyne me thurgh the herte beere
Thanne recke I noght whan I haue lost my lyf
Though that arcita wynne hir to his wyf
This is theffect and ende of my preyere
Yif me my loue thow blisful lady deere
Whan the orisoun was doon of palamon
His sacrifice he dide and that anon
Ful pitously with alle circumstaunce
Al telle I noght as now his obseruaunce
But atte laste the statue of venus shook
And made a signe wherby pt he took
That his preyere accepted was that day
For thogh the signe shewed a delay
Yet wiste he wel pt graunted was his boone
And with glad herte he wente him hoom ful soone
The thirde houre vnequal that palamon
Bigan to venus temple for to gon
Vp roos the sonne and vp roos Emelye
And to the temple of Dyane gan hye
Hir maydens pt she thider with hir sholde
Ful redily with hem the fyr they sholde
Thencens the clothes and the wesen al
That to the sacrifice longen shal

The hornes fulle of weeth as was the gyse
They lakkes nought to doon hir sacrifise
Smokynge the temple ful of clothes fame
This Cruelye with herte debonaire
Hir body wesh with water of a welle
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle
But it be any thyng in general
And yet it reye a game to heeren al
To hym pt meneth wel it reye no charge
But it is good a man been at his large
Hir brighte heer was kembd untressed al
A coronne of a grene ook reyal
Upon hir heed was set ful fayr and meete
Two fyres on the auter gan she beete
And dide hir thynges as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes and thise bookes olde
Whan kyndled was the fyr with pitous cheere
Un to Dyane she spak as ye may heere

O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene
To whom both heven & erthe & see is sene
Queene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe
Goddesse of maydens that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer and wost what I desire
As keep me fro thy vengeance and thyn ire
That Attheon abought cruelly
Chaste goddesse wel wostow pt I
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf
Ne nevere wol I be no lovere ne wyf
I am thow wost yet of thy companye
A mayde and lovest hunting and venerye
And for to walken in the wodes wilde
And nought to ben a wyf and be with childe
Nought wol I knowe the compaignye of man
But help me lady ones ye may and kan
For thise fortunes pt thou hast mi thee
And Calistoun that hath wrich love to me
And eek Atheite that loveth me so sore
This grace I preye thee withoute more
And sende love and pees bitwixe hem two
And fro me turne awey hir hertes so
That al hir hoote love and hir desyr
And al hir bisy torment and hir fyr
Be queynt or turned in another place
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace
And if my destynee be shapen so
That I shal nedes have on of hem two
As sende me hym pt most desireth me
Bishoold goddesse of clene chastitee

The preyere of Cruelye to Dyane goddesse of maydens

The lyttle teeris that on myn cheekes falle
Syn thou art mayde and kepeye of vs alle
Wyl maydenhede thou kepe and wel conseyue
And childe lyue a mayde clepid thee seyue
The fyres brenne vpon the auter cleene
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyere
But odeynly she saugh a sighte queynte
ffor right anon oon of the fyres queynte
And quykes agayn and after that anon
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon
And as it queynte it made a whistlynge
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge
And at the brondes ende out ran anon
As it were blody dropes many oon
ffor which so sore agast was Emelye
That she was wel nyh mad and gan to crye
ffor she ne wiste what it signyfied
But only for the feere thus hath she cried
And wepe that it was pitee for to heere
And they with wilde al Dyane gan appeere
With bowe in honde right as an Huntaresse
And cryde doghter stynt thyn heuynesse
Among the goddes hye it is affermed
And by eterne word writen and confermed
Thou shalt ben wedded vn to oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo
But vn to which of hem I may not telle
ffarwel for I ne may no lenger dwelle
The fyres which that on myn auter brenne
Shulle thee declare er that thou go henne
Thyn auenture of loue as in this cas
And er that fyr the ashes in the cas
Of the goddesse clatered fast and dynge
And forth she wente and made a vanysshynge
ffor which this Emelye astoned was
And seyde what amounteth this al this
I pute me in thy protection
Dyane and in thy disposicion
And hoom she goth anon the ryghte weye
This is theffect they is nothyng to seye
The ryghte hous of wyn folweynge this
Ryote vn to the temple walked is
Of hem that wyn to doon hir sacrifise
With alle the rytes of hir payen wyse
With pitous herte and heigh deuocion
Right thus to wyn she seyde hir oryson
Thow stronge god that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord yholde

The oryson of Ryote vn to wyns god of wynes

Thus hast in euery regne and euery lond
Of Armes al the bryddel in thyn hond
And hem fortunest as thee lyst deuyse
Accepte of me my pitous sacrifise
If so be that my youthe may deserue
And pt my myght be cleerthy for to serue
Thy goodhede pt I may been oon of thyne
Thanne preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne
ffor thilke peyne and thilke hoote fyr
In which thou Chilom brendest for desyr
Cheian pt thou vsedest the beautee
Of false yonge flesshe venus free
And haddest hym in armes at thy wille
Al though thee ones on a tyme myslille
Cheian Vulcanus hadde caught thee in his las
And foond thee liggynge by his wyf alias
ffor thilke sorwe that cam in thyn heite
Haue routhe as wel upon my peynes sweete
I am yong and vnkonnynge as thou woost
And as I touche with lone offended moost
That euery cam any lymes creature
ffor ose pt dooth me al this to endure
Ne reccheth nevere wher I synke or fleete
And wel I woot er ose me mercy heete
I moot nt strengthe hym in the place
And wel I woot nt outen help or grace
Of thee ne may my strengthe noght auaille
Thanne help me lord to-day in my bataille
ffor thilke fyr that Chilom brente thee
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me
And so that I to-day may haue victorie
Thyn be the trayaille and thyn be the glorie
Thy comune temple wol I most honouren
Of any place and alwey most labouren
In thy plesance and in thy crafte stronge
And in thy temple wol my banyer honge
And alle the armes of my companyne
And euere mo vn to that day I dye
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee fynde
And eek to this auow I wol me bynde
My berde my heer that hongeth long adoun
That neuere yet me felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere I wol thee yeue
And ben thy trewe knyght wel I shal lyue
Now lord haue routhe vp on my sorwes sore
yif me the victorie I aske thee namore
The preyere styntl of Arcita the stronge
The ryngyng on the temple dore that honge

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Ans eek the doxes clatereden ful faste
Of eschi Arcita comschat hym agaste
The fyres brenden vpon the auter bighte
That it gan al the temple for to lighte
And eek eke Juel the glomms anon vp yaf
And Arcita anon his hand vp haf
And moore encens vn to the fyr he caste
With other ryytes mo and atte laste
The statue of mars bigan his hauberk ryynge
And eek that doun he heeld a ful long ryynge
fful loude and dyn and seyde thus Victorie
ffor which he yaf to mars honour and glorie
And thus with ioye and hope eek to fare
Arcite anon vn to his in is fare
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne
And right anon which stif ther is bigonne
ffor thilke grantyng vn the sweene aboue
Betwixe venus the goddesse of loue
And mars the sterne god armypotente
That iupiter was biset it to stente
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knew so manye of auentures olde
ffond vn his olde experience and art
That he ful soone hath plesed euery part
As sooth is seyd eelde hath greet auantage
In eelde is bothe wysdom and vsage
men may the olde at renne and noght at rede
Saturne anon to stynten strif and drede
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde
Of al this strif he gan remedie fynde
My deere doghter venus quod Saturne
My cours that hath so wyde for to turne
Hath moore power than woot any man
Myn is the drenchyng vn the see so wan
Myn is the prison vn the derke cote
Myn is the strangling and hangyng by the throte
The murmure and the cherles rebellyng
The groynyng and the prevee enpoysonyng
I do vengeance and pleyn correccion
Whil I dwelle vn signe of the leon
Myn is the ruyne of the hye halles
The fallyng of the towres and of the walles
Vpon the mynour or the carpenter
I slow Sampson shakyng the pilers
And myne be the maladyes colde
The derke tresons and the castes olde
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence
Now herk eek moore and shal doun diligence

That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght
Shal have his lady / as thou hast hym right
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght / yet natheles
Betwixe yow / they moot be oon tyme pees
Al be ye nogt / of o complexion
That causeth al day swich division
I am thyn aid / redy at thy wille
Kepe now nat moore / I wol thy lust fulfille
Now wol I stynten / of the goddes above
Of Mars / and of Venus goddesse of love
And telle yow / as pleynly as I kan
The grete effect / for which that I bygan

Explicit tercia pars

Sequit pars quarta

Greet was the feeste / in Athenes that day
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made eueryy wight / to been in swich pleasance
That al that monday / justen they and daunce
And spenten it / in Venus heigh servyse
And by the cause / that they sholde ryse
Erly / for to seen the grete fight
Un to hir reste / wenten they at nyght
And on the morwe / whan pt day gan springe
Of hors and harneys / noyse and clateryinge
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute
And to the paleys / rood they many a route
Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
Ther mayst thow seen deuysynge of harneys
So vnkouth and so riche / and wrought so weel
Of goldsmythrye / of browdynge / and of steel
The sheeldes bryghte / testeres / and trappures
Gold hewen helmes / hawbergeons cote armures
Lordes in parementz / on hir courseres
Knyghtes of renoun / and eek squieres
Nailynge the speres / and helmes bokelynge
Gigginge of sheeldes / wit layneres lacynge
There as nede is / they were no thyng idel
The fomy steedes / on the golden bridel
Gnawynge / and faste the armurers also
With file and hamer prikynge to and fro
Yemen on foote / and communes many oon
With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon
Pypes / trompes / nakeres / clariones
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes

The knyghtes tale

The paleys ful of peples was aboute
Seeth thee ther ten holdynge hir questioun
Dyuynynge of thise Thebane knyghtes two
Whos seyden thus some seyde it shal be so
Some helden with hym with the blake berd
Some with the balled some with the thikke herd
Some seyde he looked grymme and he wolde fighte
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte
Thus was the halle ful of dwynynge
Longe after that the sonne gan to springe
The grete Theseus that of his sleep awaked
With minstralcie and noyse that was maked
Heeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche
Til that the Thebane knyghtes bothe yliche
Honured were to the paleys fet
Duc Theseus was at a window set
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone
The peple preesseth thider-ward ful sone
Hym for to seen and doon heigh reverence
And eek to herkne his heeste and his sentence
An herawd on a scaffold made an O
Til al the noyse of peple was ydo
And whan he saugh the noyse of peple al stille
Tho shewed he the mighty Dukes wille
The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise
Wherfor to shapen that they shal nat dye
He wolde his firste purpos modifye
No man therfor up peyne of lees of lyf
No manere shot ne polax ne short knyf
Into the lystes sende ne thider bringe
Ne short swerd for to stoke with poynt bitynge
No man ne drawe ne bere by his syde
Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde
But o cours with a sharp ygrounde speere
Foyne if him list on foote him self to were
And he that is at meschief shal be take
And nought slayn but be brought unto the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either syde
But thider he shal by force and there abyde
And if so be the chieftayn be take
On outher syde or elles slean his make
No lenger shal the turneyinge laste
God spede you goth forth and ley on faste
With long swerd and with maces fighteth youre fille
Goth now youre wey this is the lordes wille

The voys of peple touches the heuene
So lowde rise they / with mynstralcye
God save Arcite a lord / that is so good
he wilneth no destruccion of blood
Up goon the trompes / and the melodye
And to the lystes / is the compaignye
By ordinance / thurgh out the Cite large
Hanged ful cloth of gold and nat ful large
Ful like a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
Tho two Thebans / upon either syde
And after rood the queene and Emelye
And after that / another compaignye
Of oon and oother / after hir degree
And thus they passen / thurgh out the Cite
And to the lystes / come they by tyme
It nas nat of the day / yet fully prime
Whan ful Theseus / ful riche and hye
Ypolita the queene and Emelye
And other ladys / in degrees aboute
Un to the Seetes preesseth al the route
And westward / thurgh the gates under mayte
Arcite / and eek the hondred of his paye
With baner / is entred right anon
And in that selue moment Palamon
Is entred / est ward in the place
With Baner whyt / and hardy chiere & face
In al the folk / to seken up and down
So evene / with outen variacioun
They were / whiche compaignyes tweye
For they was noon so wys pt kouthe seye
That any hadde / of oother avantage
Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age
So evene were they chosen / for to gesse
And in two renges / faire they hem dresse
Whan pt hir names / han they ech ymette
That in hir nombre / gyle were there noon
Tho were the gates shet / and cryed was loude
Do now your devoir / yonge knyghtes proude
The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng up and down
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun
Ther is no more to seyn / but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest
In goothe the sharpe spore / in to the syde
Ther seen men / who kan juste & who kan ryde
Ther shyveren shaftes / upon sheeldes thikke
He feeleth / thurgh the herte goon the prikke
Up spryngen speres / twenty foot on highte
Out goothe the swerdes / as the silver bryghte

The knyght ·w·

The helmes they tohewen / and to shrede
Out brest the blood / with stierne stremes rede
With mighty maces / the bones they to breste
He thurgh the thikkeste / of the thurg gan threste
They semblen steedes stronge / and doun gooth al
He rolleth vnder foot / as doth a bal
He foyneth on his feet / with his tronchoun
And he him hurtleth / with his hors adoun
He thurgh the body is hurt / and sithen ytake
Maugree his heed / and brought vn to the stake
As forward was / right there he moste abyde
Another sad is / on that oother syde
And som tyme / doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refresshen / and drynken if hem leste
Ful ofte a day / han thise Thebanes two
Togydre ymet / and wrought his felawe wo
Vnhorsed hath / ech oother of hem tweye
There nas no tyme / in the vale of Galgopheye
That he nas hurt / and that the kynges wille
Was it were ceesed / as is ofte skille
So cruel on the hunte / as is Arcite
For Jelous herte / upon this Palamon
Ne in Belmarye / there nys so fel leon
That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
Ne of his praye / desireth so the blood
As Palamon / to sleen his foo Arcite
The Jelous strokes / on hir helmes byte
Out renneth blood / on both hir sydes rede
Som tyme an ende / there is of every dede
For ere the sonne / vn to the reste wente
The stronge kyng / Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
And made his fomen / recreant in his right to byte
And by the force of twenty / is he take
Unyolden / and ydrawe vn to the stake
And in the rescus / of this Palamon
The stronge kyng / Lygurge is born adoun
And kyng Emetreus / for al his strengthe
Is born out of his sadel / a furlong lengthe
So hitte him Palamon / er he were take
But al for noght / he was brought / to the stake
His hardy herte / myghte him helpe naught
He moste abyde / what that him was raught
By force / and eek by composicioun
Who sorweth nowe but woful Palamon
That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte
And right anon / this Theseus / hath don proclame
Vn to the folk / that fighten thus echon
That ech of hem / namoore / for it is doon

The knyghtes tale

Whilom as olde stories tellen us
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus
Of Athenes he was lord and governour
And in his time swich a conquerour
That greter was ther noon under the sonne
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne
What with his wisdom and his chivalrie
He conquered al the regne of Feminie
That whilom was ycleped Scithia
And weddede the queene Ipolita
And broghte hire hoom with him in glorie
With muchel pompe and greet solempnitee
And eek hire yonge suster Emelye
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde
And al his hoost in armes him bisyde
And certes if it nere to long to heere
I wolde have told yow fully the manere
How wonnen was the regne of Feminie
By Theseus and by his chivalrie
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Betwixen Athenes and the Amazones
And how asseged was Ipolita
The faire hardy queene of Scithia
And of the feste that was at hire weddinge
And of the tempest at hire hoominge
But al that thing I moot as now forbere
I have god wot a large feeld to ere
And wayke been the oxen in my plough
The remenant of the tale is long inough
I wol not letten eek noon of this route
Lat every fellow telle his tale aboute
And lat see now who shal the soper winne
And ther I lefte I wol agayn bigynne

This duk of whom I make mencioun
When he was come almost unto the toun
In al his wele and in his moste pryde
He was war as he caste his eye aside
Where that ther kneled in the hye weye
A compaignye of ladies tweye and tweye
Ech after other clothed in clothes blake
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make
That in this world nys creature lyvinge
That herde swich another weymentinge
And of this cry they nolde never stenten
Til they the reynes of his bridel henten

What folk been ye that at myn hom comynge
Perturben so my feste with cryinge
Quod Theseus have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour that thus compleyne and crye
Or who hath yow mysboden or offended
And telleth me if it may be amended
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak

The eldeste lady of hem alle spak
When she hadde swowned with a deedly cheere
That it was routhe for to seen and heere
And she answerde thus taketh noght agrief
Thou noble conquerour of Scithia
Ne wroth be nat that we thus compleyne
Thy glorie and thyn honour we not peyne
But we beseken mercy and socour
Have mercy on our wo and our dishonour
For certes lord ther is noon of us alle
That she ne hath been a duchesse or a queene
Now be we caytyves as it is wel seene
Thanked be Fortune and hire false wheel
Ther nis noon estat assureth to be weel
And certes lord to abyden your presence
Heere in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han been waytinge al this fortenight
Now help us lord sith it is in thy myght
I wrecche which that wepe and waille thus
Was whilom wyf to king Capaneus
That starf at Thebes cursed be that day
And alle we that been in this array
And maken al this lamentacioun
We losten alle our housbondes at that toun
Whil that the seege therabout lay
And yet the olde Creon god him wrey
That lord is now of al this lond by right
In his unkindely wrathe and his despight
Hath alle our lordes which that been alyve
Doon in a foul prisoun to deyen alyve
And in a grave al heepe yfeere hem leyen
And wol noght suffren hem therout to meyen
Neither to noon of hem his frendes dere
Neither for pitee ne for mede ne for preyere
But simply wol doon hem alle sterven
Now have mercy have upon our wommanhede
Thou hast of eyen two and we nat oon
For in thy sighte hope we alle for oon
Do with our bodies what thee lyketh best
But we preye thee let us have the corps to grave
Of our lordes which that we heere biholde
For certes it is routhe thise women wolde
Upon hem have compassioun as thou
Whan that thou thinkest upon hire wo I trowe
That ben of noble kynrede born and wight
Suffren in thyn eyen so foul a sight

This worthy duk doun from his courser lighte
With herte pitous whan he gan hem see
So wommanly so rufully to plese
And in his armes he hem alle up hente
And hem conforteth fayre and subtilly
And swoor his othe as he was trewe knyght
He nolde fro the feeld departen his myght
Til he hem wroken hadde as he thoughte good
As he that was of Fortune ay the mirour
And ay the lode-sterre as in his contree
Ther as he wende passen any contree
Ther was he fyl and knowe of ech estat
Wel more than any man that is or was
And in this caas he gan his ost areste
Noght wolde he leten in the contree reste
Til he the fortune knewe of this matere
So sleigh his herte was and eek so dere
His ire fortheth and no lenger tarieth
To Athenes right his wey he takketh
Nought but in armes rede as any glede
He nolde have slepe ne meete ne drynke in hede
And right anon as that his banner is spredde
Hard was ther noon to bidden him his dyner
Ne noon to proffren him his service
Ther was no tarying noon ne no devys
Al that his folk may dryve as fleeth the wynd
Hym thoughte he hadde alle tygres of Ynd
Alle the contree of Trace on him to route
Ne stynteth nat ne no wight with him dooth route
Til he to Athenes come and that anon
The which whan it was knowe of his cominge
Ther needeth noght to speere of his welcominge
Of observances of that curteisye
Was never prince more honoured in his lyve
And thilke three compleyninge queenes also
Han wel conceyved of his sighte so
Biforen the citee in a valey adoun
Wher as they han alighte al in a toun
In clothes blake dropping pitously
And whan that they han caught his eyen two
Upon hem first they fille gonne to crye
And losten alle hire speche and in a swowe
Doun fille they alle as they were overthrowe
And this duk his herte caught so wel pitee
That it is fleigh out of the doores of his sighte
And doun he sit and with his eyen two
He gan biholde hire sorwe and hire wo
Hire humble cheere and hire pitous chaunge
Hire wommanly countenaunce hire facon straunge
Which that hire sorwe shewed outwardly
So mighte it sitten in the herte inwardly
He thoughte wel they were of greet lynage
And to hem spak in ful humble langage
And comforteth hem in ful benigne wyse
And bad hem telle him fully al hire emprise
Why they so wepten and so syked alle
Of which the eldeste lady gan to calle
Out of a traunce and gan to speke as blyve
Which that hadde on a mantel blak yclyve
Upon three kirtles eek of sondry hewe
And seyde lord whom Fortune list to shewe
Hire doublenesse first in prosperitee
And syth she wole we wepe and crye and plete
Ne wondre nat that we to yow complayne
Whil that oure harmes been in hire demayne
For gentil men we proven out of doute
By olde bokes of your worthinesse
That pitee is to shewen in swich caas
And that is nothing dred for no trespas
And certes lord we hope in your presence
We shul nat been disconforted as in vayn
For as we han herd of your honestee
Of your renoun of your benignitee
That nis ther noon that dooth to yow socour
Neither for mede ne for non other flour
Ye wole it doon for verray goddesse sake
And for the renoun that ye shul take
Of helpinge of us wrecches on this molde
That han our owene sorwes alle tolde
Have on our cares pitee as we crye
And upon us wrecches thyn eyen dresse
Lo myn entente is nothing for to wepe
Ne for to crye to han thyn eyen depe
But for to have confort and sovereyn gyde
Upon our wo and on our cares wyde
For which we mowen sevely biseke
Som drope of pitee thurgh thyn gentil eke
That feelingly thou reulest al this thing
Have on us pitee thou flour of kyng
Quod she with that hire eyen two she caste
Which nas but hope hire sorwes to recaste
And with that word this other queene anon
Fil doun in swowe and made as any stoon
And whan that she hire speche hadde and hire mynde
For pitous wo hire herte gan to bynde
She seyde lord that set is lowe and hye
Thou shapere of this werld and governye
Which that men clepen Juppiter the king
Thou glorious lord of feeldes and of thinge
Which that thy myghty arm hath wrought and stent
Al this werld and al that therin is ment
Wel may the cursed lond of Trace
And other londes eek and regnes mo
Honouren the and holden hem in pryde
For they in armes han the victorie
And laude and glorie of chivalrie
Is kept in lond ther thou hast lyst to sprede
Thou wost how it fareth of this matere
Whan thou hast caught a newe lord and syre
To encrese with thy lond thy worthinesse
Thou wost what is requisit in noblesse
Thou wost how routhe is regned in a lord
Have on us pitee that have kept record
Alwey of it in our adversitee
For wel wot we that thou hast been and arte
The verray lode-sterre of our herte
Of thee cleymeth helpe many a wydowe and wyf
Ne lat nat lese al utterly our lyf
Syn that it lyth in thyn auctoritee
Rewe upon us and upon our infantes free
Which that thou mayst al save and rescowe
And with that word she fil adoun in swowe
And ther she lyth as she were overcome
And another queene al in blak right nome
Which that had wept and waymented hire fille
Til that the teeres in hire eyen stille
And sobbinge she seyde lord that after derke
List and reson discreven and shewe
Thou hast thy myght fortune hire thral and bonde
That noght mowe stonden alle thinges under honde
Thou hast thy wyf ywonne in swich manere
For love of whom men holden gret penance
That lyf for lyf ne may ne wole nat twinne
But as hire lust governe and gyde hire inne
For love or for unlove or for plesance
Governe hire as hire list for variance
Have thou non other lore of us wrecches
Fortune hath broght us heere to hire hwheles
And mercy lord we crye and nothing elles
For we acorsed been and lorne alle
Lord may our bodies dye right in thy sighte
For now on us shyneth no wyght
And with that word in swowe she gan to falle
And another queene that was right wo bigon
And sat with pale face and dede as stoon
Whan she hire speche and hire mynde hadde
Right as a wood lyonesse hire adradde
Up sterte and seyde O Juppiter alas
Thou hast two neces myne and two cosynes
Of al the grete of Troye the sorwful wyf
And I sorwful widwe wrecche of lyf
Which that was whilom wyf to worthy Hector
That was the flour of curteisye and honour
And sith that day that cruel Achilles
Him slow not fer fro the walles of Troyes
Have I endured bothe wo and care
And now lyve in thraldom of servage
Fortune which that chaungeth ay hire face
Hath me biraft at ones alle blisse
Lord which that in thy lookinge bynde
Han al this folk and hem fortune as lynde
Have mercy on the teeres which I shede
Have mercy on my child so fayre and mede
Which that thou mayst save and alle rescowe
And with that word she fil adoun in swowe
And lith as she were dede upon the grene
And another queene that was hight Emelye
Ful lyk unto the goddesse Emelye
In beautee as she best was in hire lyve
So passed she alle that ever man sye
Were it in Troye among hire enemys
Or in Athenes among hire freendes
Hire beautee hadde hire overcome alle
So was she bright so lusty and so clene
That it up passed alle beautees alle
Of Citherea the goddesse of delyt
Hire faire body lyth in swich manere
As that no wight ne mighte have seyn hire lyke
Hire yen caste she upward to the skye
Ther as hire spirit was with Mars on hye
Which that hire hadde in his firste lyve
Hire whyte hondes she gan to wryve
Hire yelowe heeres she to rente
And in hire wo to Juppiter she wente
Why wostow lord my beautee in this wyse
Why wostow lord my youthe my lyf my prime
Why wostow lord my blisful lyf and myn
Why wostow lord my beautee and my pleyn
Why wostow lord my beautee and my pleyn
Why wostow lord my beautee and my pley

Tuyghtw

Tund of another thyng they ceyen as fayn
That of hem alle was they noon yslayn
Al were they sore yhurt and namely oon
That Ect a speye was thirles his brest boon
To other wounded and to broken armes
Some hadden salues and Dino hadden charmes
ffermacies of herbes and eek save
They drouken for they wolde hir lymes have
ffor which this noble Duc as he wel kan
Conforteth and honoureth euery man
And made feuel al the longe nyght
Un to the straunge lordes as was nyght
Ne they was holden no disconfitynge
But as a Iustes or a tourneiynge
ffor soothly they was no discomfiture
ffor fallyng nys nat but an auenture
Ne to be sad by force un to the stake
Unyolden and with twenty knyghtes take
O persone allous with outen mo
And hayyed forth by arm foot and too
And eek his steede dryuen forth with staues
With footmen bothe yemen and eek knaues
It nas aretted hym no vileynye
They may no man clepen it cowardye
ffor which anon duc Theseus leet crye
To stynten alle rancour and enuye
The gree as well of o syde as of oother
And either syde ylik as oothers brother
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree
And fully heeld a feeste dayes three
And conueyed the kynges worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely
And hoom went euery man the righte way
Ther was nomoore but farewel have good day
Of this bataille I wol nomoore endite
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite
Swelleth the brest of arcite and the sore
Encreesseth at his herte moore and moore
The clotered blood for any leche craft
Corrupteth and is in his bouk ylaft
That neither veyne blood ne ventusynge
Ne drynke of herbes may ben his helpynge
The vertu expulsif or animal
ffro thilke vertu cleped natural
Ne may the venym voyden ne expelle
The pypes of his longes gonne to swelle
And euery lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venym and corrupcioun

Thyn gaynyth neythyr-for to gete his lyf
Vonlyt vpcrafd ne sounefand slyattif
Al is to bysyen thilke Regioun
Nature hath nofe no Dominacioun
And certeinly they Nature wol natt chyche
ffaire whel pfisik go bey the mastn to chyche
This al and sooth that Arcita moot dye
ffor which he serveth after Cruelye
And Palamon that was his cosyn deere
Thanne seyde he thus as ye shal after heere
Nyght may the wofful spynt in myn heste
Dryue o point of alle my sorwes reste
To yow my ladyl that I love moost
But I biqueethe the servyce of my goost
To yow aboven every creature
Syn pt my lyf may no lenger dure
Allas the wo allas the peynes strange
That I for yow have suffred and so longe
Allas the deeth allas myn Emelye
Allas departynge of our compaignye
Allas myn hertes queene allas my wyf
Myn hertes lady/ender of my lyf
What is this world what asketh men to have
Now with his love now in his colde grave
Alone withouten any compaignye
ffarewel my swete foo myn Emelye
And softe take me in youre armes tweye
ffor love of god and herkneth what I seye
I have heer/et my cosyn Palamon
Has stif and vertuous manly a man
ffor love of yow and for my jalousye
And Juppiter so wys my soule gye
To speken of a servant proprely
With alle circumstances trewely
That is to seyn trouthe honour knyghthede
Wysdom humblesse estaat and heigh kynrede
ffredom and al that longeth to that art
So Juppiter have of my soule part
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to been loved as Palamon
That serveth yow and wol doon al his lyf
And if that ever ye shul been a wyf
ffor yet natt Palamon the gentil man
And eek that wost his speche faille gan
And from his herte up to his brest was come
The cold of deeth that hadde hym overcome
And yet moore over for in his armes two
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago

Knyght

Only the intellect with outen more
That dwelles in his herte up fro the ore
Gan faillen when the herte felte deeth
Dusked his eyen two and failled breeth
But on his lady yet caste he his eye
His laste word was mercy Quene
His spirit chaunged hous and gan out fle-
As I can nede I kan nat tellen whe-
Therfore I stynte I nam no bisshop
Of soules fynde I nat in this registre
Me rekketh ne list thilke opinions to telle
Of hem though pt they gunnen whet they dwelle
Ayein the wold they ayain his soule gyde
Walk wel I speken forth of Emelye
Knyghte Emelye and doketh Palamon
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swouninge and bar- hir fro the corps away
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day
To tellen how she wep both ene and more
For in which cas wommen have which sorwe
Whan pt hir housbonde is from hem ago
Or elles fallen in which maladye
That at the laste certeinly they dye
Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk and eek of tendre yeres
In al the toun for deeth of this Theban
For hym they wepeth both child and man
So greet a weping was they noon ne sayn
Whan Ector was ybrought al fressh y slayn
To Troye alas the pitee pt was thay-
Thanne yinge of chekes rentinge eek of heer
Ech yaf the olde stok be red this wommen crye
And hadden gold ynough and Emelye
No man but wisly gladen Theseus
Saue yinge his olde fader Egeus
That knew this worldes transmutacion
As he hadde seyn it up and down
Joye after wo and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hem ensamples and likenesse

Right as they dyed nede man ques he
That he ne shuwe in estre in som degree
Right so they shuwe ned man he seyde
In al this world pt som tyme he ne deyde
This wo[rld] nys but a thurghfare ful of wo
And we been pilgrymes passinge to and fro
Deeth is an ende of every worldes soore
And over al this yet seyde he muchel more

To this effect ful wisely to enhorte
The peple that they sholde hem reconforte
Duc Theseus with al his busy cure
Cast nolde ek ther that the sepulture
Of goode Arcite may best ynakes be
And ek most honurable in his degree
And at the laste he took conclusion
That ther as first Arcite and Palamon
Hadden for loue the battaille hem bitwene
That in that Bosk grene / whoote and grene
They as he hadde hise amorouse desires
His compleynte and for loue hise hoote fires
He wolde make a fyr / in which the office
Funeral he myghte al accomplice
And leet comande anon to hakke and hewe
The okes olde and leye hem on a rewe
In compas / ek / amidde for to brenne
Hise officers with swifte feet they renne
And ryden anon at his comandement
And after this Theseus hath ysent
After a beere / and it al ouer spradde
With cloth of gold the richeste pt he hadde
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite
Vpon his handes hadde he gloues white
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene
He leyde hym bare the visage / on the beere
Therwith he wepte / that pitee was to seene
And for the peple / sholde seen hym alle
Whan it was day / he brighte hym to the halle
That roreth of the crying / and the soun
Tho cam this woful Thebane Palamon
With flotery berd / and ruggy asshy heeres
In clothes blake / ydropped al with teres
And passynge othere / of wepynge Emelye
The rewefulleste / of al the compaignye
In as muche / as the seruyce sholde be
The more noble / and riche in his degree
Duc Theseus / leet forth three steedes brynge
That trapped were in steel al glitterynge
And couered with the armes of Dam Arcite
Vpon thise steedes / grete and white
Ther sitten folk / of whiche oon baar his sheeld
Another his spere / in his hondes heeld
The thridde baar ek hym / his bowe Turkeys
Of brend gold was the cas / and eek the harneys
And riden forth a pas / with sorweful cheere
Toward the grove as ye shul after heere

Knyght

The noblesse of the grekes / that ther were
Upon hir shuldres / cayeden the beere
With oak pees / and eyen rede and bere
Thurgh out the cite / by the maister strete
That sprad was al with blak / and wondey hyse
Right of the shine / is the strete ycleped
Upon the right hond / wente alle Egeus
And on that oother syde / Duc Theseus
With vessel in hir hand / of gold ful fyn
Al ful of hony / wyn and blood and wyn
Eek palamon / with ful greet compaignye
And after that / cam with ful fresshe knyghtes
Ententyf in honde / as was that tyme the gyse
To don the office / of funeral servyse
Heigh labour / and ful greet apparaillynge
Was at the service / and the fyr makynge
That with his grene top / the heven
And twenty fadme of brede / the armes straughte
This is to seyn / the boughes were so hoge
Of tree ful fyn / was leyd ful many a loge
But how the fyr / was maked up on highte
Ne eek the names / that the trees highte
As ook fyr / birch / asp / alder / holm / popler
Wylugh / elm / plane / assh / box / chasteyn / lynde / laurer
Mapul / thorn / beech / hasel / eek whippletree
How they were hewen / shal nat be told for me
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and down
Disherited / of hir habitacioun
In which they were / in reste and pees
Nymphes / fawnes / and amadrides
Ne how the bestes / and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere / whan the tree fille
Ne how the ground / agast was of the light
That was nat wont / to seen the sonne bright
Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree
And than with drye stokkes / cloven a three
And than with grene wode / and spycerye
And than with cloth of gold / and with perrye
And gerlandes / hangynge / with ful many a flour
The myrre / thencens / with al so greet odour
Ne how Arcite / lay among al this
Ne with what richesse / about his body is
Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse
Putte in the fyr / of funeral servyse
Ne how she swowned / whan men made fyr
Ne what she spak / ne what was hir desir
Ne what jewels / men in the fyr caste
Whan pt the fyr / was greet / and brente faste

¶ Me hoth gonne caste hyr eyeen aus gonne hyr eyre
aus of hyr vestiments whiche pt they were
aus coppes fulle of wyn aus milk aus blod
In to the fyr that brente as it were wood
Me hoth the grekes with an huge noute
Thes mven al the place aboute
Upon the left haus wt a lous shoutynge
aus thnes with hyr armes clattrynge
aus thnes hoth the ladyes gonne crye
aus hoth pt las was hondrayd ffuchye
Me hoth ayeine is brent to asshen colde
Me hoth that lyth take was yholde
Al thilke nyght ne hoth the grekes pleye
The take pleyes ne kepe I nat to seye
Who wrastleth best naked with oulle enoynt
Ne who that bar hym best in no disioynt
I wol natt tellen eek hoth that they goon
Hoom til Atthenes whan the pley is doon
But shortly to the ponit thanne wol I reuse
aus maken of my longe tale an ende
¶ Gy processe aus by lengthe of yeres
Al stynte is the mornynge & the teres
Of grekes by oon generyal assent
Thanne semes me they was a parlement
At Atthenes upon certein ponit aus cause
Amonge the whiche ponit yspoken was
To have with certein contrees alliance
aus have fully of Thebans obeisance
ffor which this noble Theseus anon
Let senden after gentil Palamon
Unkist of hym that was the cause aus hy
But mvche blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comandement on hye
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye
Whan they were set aus hust was al the place
aus Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam fram his wise brest
His eyen sette he they as was his lest
aus with a sad visage he sikes stille
aus after that right thus he seyde his wille
¶ The fyrste moevere of the cause above
Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love
Grete was theffect aus heigh was his entente
Wel wiste he why aus what they of he mente
ffor with that fayre cheyne of love he bond
The fyr the eyr the watter aus the lond
In certeyn bounde that they may nat flee
That same prince aus that same moevere quod he

Knyght w

Hath stablissed in this Cercles cloyse aboun
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To al that is engendred in this place
Ouer the which day they may nat pace
Al maugre hem yet this dayes cert abregge
They needeth nought noon auctorite allegge
ffor it is preued by experience
But that me list declaren my sentence
Thanne may men by this ordre cert systeme
That thilke moeue stable is and eterne
Cert may men knowe but it be a fool
That euery day seeth simyleth from his cool
ffor nature hath taken his bigynnyng
Of no party or of cantel of a thyng
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable
Descendyng so til it be commyn table
And therfore of his crist purueiaunce
He hath so cert biset his ordinaunce
That seedes of thynges and progressions
Shullen endure by successions
And nat eterne with outen any lyne
This may ye wel vnderstonde and seen it eyne
Loo the ook that hath so long a norissyng
ffrom tyme that it first bigynneth springe
And hath so long a lif as wel may see
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree
Considereth eek how that the hasle stoon
Vnder our feet on which we tresde and goon
Yet wasteth it as it lyth by the weye
The broke dryueth continuely weyeth dreye
The grete tounes se we wane and wende
Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath ende
Of man and womman seen we wel also
That nedeth noon of thise termes two
This is to seyn in youthe or elles age
He moot be deed the tyme as shal a page
Som in his bed som in the deep see
Som in the large feeld as men may see
Ther helpeth nought al goth that vs be weye
Thanne may I seyn al this thyng moot deye
What maketh this but Iupiter the kyng
That is prince and cause of alle thyng
Conuertynge al vn to his proper welle
ffrom which it is deryued sooth to telle
And heer agayns no creature on lyue
Of no degree auailleth for to stryue
Thanne re it wysdom as it thynketh me
To maken vertu of necessitee

Exemplu

Exemplu

And take it heed that we may nat eschue
And namely that to vs alle is due
And who so gruccheth ought he dooth folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certeinly a man hath moost honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour
Whan he is war of his goode name
Than hath he woon his freend ne hym no shame
And glasseth ought his freend been of his worth
Whan with honour vp yolden is his breth
Than shal his name apalled is for age
For al forgeten is his vassellage
Than is it best as for a worthy fame
To dyen whan pt he is best of name
The contrayre of al this is wilfulnesse
Why grucchen we why have we heuynesse
That goode ayenst of ourselue flour
Departen is with duetee and honour
Out of this foule prison of this lyf
Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare that loues hem so weel
Can he hem thank? nay god woot neil a deel
That bothe his soule and eek hem self offende
And yet they moore hy lustes nat amende
What may I conclusion of this longe serye
But after woo I preye vs to be merye
And thanken Iupiter of al his grace
And er that we departen from this place
I preye we make of oure lyves tweo
A parfit ioye lastynge euermo
And looketh now whey moost sorwe is heyre
They shal the first auaunten and bigynne
Thus quod he this is my fulle assent
With al thise heere of my parlement
That gentil Palamon thyn owene knyght
That serueth yow with wille herte and myght
And ever hath doon syn pt ye first hym knewe
That ye shul of youre grace vpon hym rewe
And taken hym for housbonde and for lord
Leue me youre hond for this is our accord
Let see now of youre womanly pitee
He is a kynges brother sone pardee
And though he were a poure bacheler
Syn he hath serued you so many a yeer
And had for you so greet aduersitee
It moste been considered leeueth me
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right
Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful right

Nolde they nedeth ate ceremonying
To make yolk assente to this thyng
Com neer and taak youre lady by the hond
Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond
That yghte matrimoigne or manage
By al the counseil and the lynage
And thus with alle blisse and melodye
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye
And god that al this wyde world hath wroght
Sende hym his love that it deere aboght
For nolde is Palamon in alle wele
Lyvynge in blisse in richesse and in heele
And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely
And he hir serveth so gentilly
That nevere was there no word hem bitwene
Of jalousie or any oother teene
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
And god save al this fayre compaignye Amen ~

Here is ended the knyghtes tale &

Here folwen the wordes bitwene the hoost and the millere &

Whan that the knyght hath thus his tale ytold
In al the route ne was there yong ne old
That he ne seyde it was a noble storie
And worthy for to drawen to memorie
And namely the gentils everichon
Oure hoost lough and swoor so moot I gon
This goth aright unbokeles is the male
Lat se nolde who shal telle anothre tale
For trewely the game is wel bigonne
Nolde telleth on sire mouk if that ye konne
Somwhat to quite with the knyghtes tale
The millere that for dronken was al pale
So that unnethe upon his hors he sat
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie
But in Pilates voys he gan to crie
And swoor by armes and by blood & bones
I can a noble tale for the nones
With which I wol nolde quite the knyghtes tale
Oure hoost sauh that he was dronke of ale
And seyde abyd Robyn my leeve brother
Som bettre man shal telle us first another

Wyse and lat vs werken thryftily
Thy gossibes counsil quod he / that wol nat I
ffor I wol speke / or elles go my wey
Thow hoost answeyst / tel on a deueles wey
Thou art a fool / thy wit is ouercome
Now herkneth quod the tyrwhyt alle and some
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke / I knowe it by my soun
And therfore / if that I my-sspeke or seye
Wyte it the ale of southwerk I preye
ffor I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
How that a clerk / hath set the wrightes cappe
The reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe
Let be thy lewed dronken harlotrye
It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
To apeyren any man / or hynder his estaat
And eek to bryngen wyues in swich fame
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thynges seyn
This dronke millere / spak ful soone ageyn
And seyde leue brother Osekold
Who hath no wyf / he is no cokewold
But I sey nat therfore / that thou art oon
Ther-been ful goode wyues many oon
And euene a thousand goode / ageyns oon badde
That knowestow wel thy self but if thou madde
Why artow angry / with my tale now
I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thow
Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plogh
Take vp on me / moore than ynogh
As demen of my self that I am oon
I wol bileue wel / that I am noon
An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf
Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf
So he may fynde goddes foyson there
Of the remenaunt / needeth nat enquere
What sholde I / moore seyn but this millere
He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere
But told his cherles tale in his manere
Me thynketh that I shal reherce it here
And therfore euery gentil wight I preye
ffor goddes loue demeth nat that I seye
Of yuel entente / but that I moot reherce
Hir tales alle / be they bettre or werse
Or elles falsen som of my matere
And therfore / who so list it nat yheere
Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale

Millers

Of stodial thyng that toucheth gentillesse
And eek moralitee and holynesse
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys
The millere is a cherl ye knowe wel this
So was the reue and othere manye mo
And harlotrie they tolden bothe two
Aforyeth yow pitteth me out of blame
And eek men shal nat maken ernest of game

Heere biginneth the millers his tale

Whilom there was dwellyinge at Oxenford
A riche gnof that gestes heeld to bord
And of his craft he was a carpenter
With hym there was dwellyinge a povre scoler
Hadde lerned art but al his fantasye
Was turned for to lerne astrologye
And koude a certein of conclusions
To demen by interrogacions
If pt men asked hym in certein houres
Whan pt men sholde have droghte or elles shoures
Or if men asked hym what sholde bifalle
Of everyy thyng I may nat rekene hem alle
This clerk was cleped hende Nicholas
Of deerne love he koude and of solas
And therto he was sleigh and ful privee
And lyk a mayden meke for to see
A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
Alone with outen any compaignye
Ful fetisly ydight with herbes swote
And he hym self as sweete as is the rote
Of lycorys or any cetewale
His almagest and bookes grete and smale
His astrelabie longynge for his art
His augrym stones layen faire apart
On shelves couches at his beddes heed
His presse ycovered with a falding reed
And al above there lay a gay sautrie
On which he made at nyghtes melodie
So swetely that al the chambre song
And Angelus ad virginem he song
And after that he song the kynges noote
Ful often blessed was his myrie throte
And thus this swete clerk his tyme spente
After his freendes finding and his rente
This carpenter hadde wedded newe a wyf
Which that he lovede more than his lyf

Of yong yeeue / she was of age
Jalous he was / and held his wyfe in cage
ffor she was yong and wylde / and he was old
and demed hym self been lik a cokewold
he knew wat Catoun / for his wit was mide
That bad man holde wedde his owenliside
wyen holde wedden / after hir estaat
ffor youthe and elde / is often at debaat
But sith that he was fallen in the snare
he moste endure / as other folk his care
ffair was this yonge wyf / and they with al
as any wezele hir body / gent and smal
A ceynt she werede / ybawes al of silk
A barm cloth / as white as morne milk
Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
white was hir smok / and broyden al bifoore
and eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
Of colblak silk / entrelaced and eek oute
The tapes / of hir white volupey
Were of the same suyte of hir coler
hir filet / broad of silk / and set ful hye
And sikerly / she hadde a likerous eye
fful smale ypulled / were hir browes two
And tho were bent / and blake as any sloo
She was / ful moore blisful on to see
Than is the nekke / of the verrey tree
And softer / than the wolle is of a wether
And by hir gyrdel / heeng a purs of lether
Tasseles with gold / and pleted at Latoun
In al this world / to seken up and doun
There nas no man so wys / that koude thenche
So gay a popelote / or swich a wenche
fful brighter / was the shyning of hir hewe
Than in the tour / the noble yforged newe
But of hir song / it was / as loude and yerne
As any swalwe / sittynge on a berne
Therto / she koude skippe / and make game
As any kyde / or calf / folwynge his dame
Hir mouth was sweete / as bragot / or the meeth
Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth
Wynsynge she was / as is a joly colt
long as a mast / and upright as a bolt
A broche she bar / vpon hir lowe coler
As brood / as is the boos of a bokler
Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye
She was a primerole / a piggesnye
ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde
Ful yet / for any good yeman to wedde

Millers tale

Alle one and eft one so befel the cas
That on a day this hende Nicholas
fil with this yonge wyf to rage and pleye
Whil that hir housbonde was at Oseneye
As clerkes been ful subtile and ful queynte
And prively he caughte hir by the queynte
And seyde yflees but if ich have my wille
For derne love of thee lemman I spille
And heeld hir harde by the haunche bones
And seyde lemman love me al atones
Or I wol dyen also god me save
And she sprong as a colt doth in the trave
And with hir heed she wryed faste awey
She seyde I wol nat kisse thee by my fey
Why lat be quod ich lat be Nicholas
Or I wol crie out harrow and alas
Do way your handes for your curteisye
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye
And spak so faire and profred him so faste
That she him love graunted atte laste
And swoor hir ooth by seint Thomas of Kent
That she wol been at his comandement
Whan pt she myght hir leyser wel espie
Myn housbonde is so ful of jalousie
That but ye wayte wel and been prive
I wot right wel I nam but dead quod she
Ye moste been ful deerne as in this cas
Nay thou of crye thee nought quod Nicholas
A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle
But if he kouthe a carpenter bigyle
And thus they been accorded and ysworn
To wayte a time as I have told biforn
Whan Nicholas had doon thus everydel
And thakked hire about the lendes wel
He kiste hir sweete and taketh his sautrie
And playeth faste and maketh melodie
Than fil it thus pt to the parisshe chirche
Cristes owene werkes for to wirche
This goode wyf went on an haliday
Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day
So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk
Now was there of that chirche a parisshe clerk
The which that was ycleped Absolon
Crul was his heer and as the gold it shoon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Ful streight and evene lay his joly shode
His rode was reed his eyen greye as goos
With Powles window corven on his shoos

In hosses yede ye Sweete fetisly
Ycias he Sas ful smal and upright
Al in a kirtel of a lyght Saget
ffull fayre and thikke been the poyntes set
And they vp on he hadde a gay supplys
As shit as is the blosme vp on the rys
A myne chyls he Sas so god me save
Wel konde he laten blood and clippe and shave
And maken a chartle of lond or Acquitaunce
In tKenty manere konde he trippe and daunce
After the stole of Oxenfors tho
And Sith his legges casten to and fro
And pleyen songes on a small rubible
They to he song somtyme a loud quynyble
And as Wel konde he pleye on his giterne
In al the toun nas Wyckhous ne Taverne
That he ne visited with his solas
Ther any gaylard Tapestere Sas
But sooth to seyn he Sas sounded somdel squaymous
Of fartyng and of speche daungerous
This Absolon pt rolif Sas and gay
Sooth Sith a Sevecy on the haliday
Sensynge the wymmes of the parisshe faste
And many a lovely look on hem he caste
And namely on this Carpenteres wyf
To looke on hym hym thoughte a myry lyf
She Sas so prve and swete and likerous
Ay Wel wolde he synge if she hadde been a spous
And he a Cat he wolde hyr hente anon
This parisshe clerk this joly Absolon
Hath in his herte swich a love longynge
That of no wyf took he noon offrynge
ffor certeyne he sayde he wolde noon
The mone when it Sas nyght ful brighte shoon
And Absolon his gyterne hath ytake
ffor paramours he thoghte for to wake
And forth he goeth jolif and amorous
Til he cam to the Carpenteres hous
A litel after cokkes hadde ycrowe
And dressed hym vp by a shotwyndowe
That Sas vp on the Carpentens Wal
He singeth in his voys gentil and smal
Now dere lady if thy wille be
I pray yow that ye wole thynke on me
fful Wel acordaunt to his gyternynge
This Carpenter awook and herde singe
And spak vn to his wyf and seyde anon
What Alison herestow nat Absolon

Tyrwhitt

That chaunteth thus / ouer oure bowes wal
And she answerde hir housbonde / ther withal
Jhis god woot (ohn) / I heere it euery deel
This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than wel
ffro day to day / to day / this oly Absolon
Go woweth hir / that hym is go bigon
He waketh al the nyght / and al the day
He kembeth his lokkes broode / and made hym gay
He woweth hir / by messages / and by his cage
And for hir wood / he wolde been hir owene page
He syngeth brokkynge as a nyghtyngale
He sente hir pyment / meeth and spiced ale
And wafres / pipyng / hoot / out of the glede
And for she was of toune / he profreth mede
ffor som folk wol ben yonnen for richesse
And som for strokes / and som for gentillesse
Som tyme to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye
He pleyeth herodes vp on a scaffold hye
But what auailleth hym / as in this cas
She loueth so this hende (Nicholas
That Absolon / may blowe the bukkes horn
He ne hadde / for his labour but a scorn
And thus / she maketh Absolon hir ape
And al his cheste / thynketh til a jape
fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
Men seyn wight thus / alwey the nye slye
Maketh the ferre leeue to be loth
ffor though that Absolon / be wood or wroth
By cause / that he fer was fro hir sighte
This nye (Nicholas / stood vp on his lighte
And Dan lepe thee wel / thou hende (Nicholas
ffor Absolon / may waille and synge alas
And so bifel it on a Saterday
This carpenter / was goon til Osney
And hende (Nicholas and Alison
Acorden been / to this conclusion
That (Nicholas / shal shapen hym a wyle
This oldy jalous housbonde to bigyle
And if so be / the game wente aright /
She sholde sleepen vp on his Ayn al nyght
ffor this was his desyr / and hir solas
And wight Auon / with outen wordes mo
This (Nicholas no lenger wolde tarie
But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie
Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye
And to hir housbonde / bad hir for to seye
If that he axed / after (Nicholas
She sholde seye / she nyste where he was

Quod Ouidius / Artibus Agrestis

Tyrlley ·

Of al that day / ye laugh hym nat with eye
She trowed / that he was in maladye
ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle
he nolde answere / for thyng that myghte falle
This passeth forth / al thilke Saterday
That ·Nicholas / stille in his chaumbre lay
And eet and sleep / or dide what hym leste
Til Sonday / that the sonne gooth to reste
This goly Carpenter / hath gret mervayle
Of ·Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym ayle
And seyde / I am adrad by Seint Thomas
It stondeth nat aright with ·Nicholas
God shilde / that he deyde sodeynly
This World is now ful tikel sikerly
I saugh today / a cors ybore to chirche
That now / on monday last / I saugh hym wirche
Go up quod he / vn to his knave anoon
Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon
Looke how it is / and tel me boldely
This knave gooth hym up ful stoutely
And at the chaumbre dore / whil that he stood
He cride and knokked / as that he were wood
What how / what do ye maister ·Nicholay
How may ye sleepen / al the longe day
But al for nought / he herde nat a word
An hole he found / ful lowe vp on a bord
Ther as the cat / was wont in for to crepe
And at that hole / he looked in ful depe
Til at the laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
This ·Nicholas / sat mumpyng evere vpright
As he had kiked / on the newe moone
Adoun he gooth / and tolde his maistre soone
In what array / he saugh that ilke man
This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan
And seyde / help vs Seinte ffrydeswyde
A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
This man is falle / with his astromye
In som woodnesse / or in som agonye
I thoghte ay wel / how that it sholde be
Men sholde nat knowe / of goddes privetee
Ye / blessed be alwey / a lewed man
That noght / but only his bileve kan
So fareth another clerk / with astromye
He walketh in the feeldes / for to prye
Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
Til he was / in a marleput yfalle
He saugh nat that / but yet by Seint Thomas
Me reketh nowht / of harde ·Nicholas

Tyuulley ...

He shall be vated of his studiyng
If that I may by Ihus hevene kyng
Get me a staf that I may vndyrstoze
Whil pt thou Robyn heedest of the doze
he shal out of his studiyng as I gesse
And to the chaunbre doze he gan hym dresse
his knaue was a stiong cayl foz the nones
And by the hastre he haaf it of atones
In to the floez the doze fil anon
This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon
And eke cayes vpbayd vn to the Ely
This Cayppentey thenke he keye vn despeyr
And hente hym by the sholdres mygtstily
And shook hym hayde and eyde spitously
What Nicholay what how what looke aboun
Awake and thenk on Cristes passioun
I crouche thee from elues and fro wightes
Ther pt the nyghtspel seyde he anonrightes
On foure halues of the hous aboute
And on the thresshfold of the doze without
Ihu crist and seint Benedight
Blesse this hous from ely elfkes wight
ffoz nyghtes neyre the white pater noster
Where wentestow seint Petres soster
And atte laste this hende Nicholas
Gan foz to sike soze and seyde allas
Shal al this woze be lost eftsones now
This Cayppentey answeyde what seystow
What thynk on god as we doon men pt swynke
This Nicholas answeyde fecche me drynke
And after wol I speke vn pryuetee
Of certeyn thyng that touchith me and thee
I wol telle it noon other man certeyn
This Cayppentey goth down and cometh ageyn
And broghte of mygty ale a large quart
And whan pt eche of hem had dronke his part
This Nicholas his doze faste shette
And down the Cayppentey by hym he sette
He seyde John myn hoost lief and deze
Thou shalt vpon thy trouthe swere me heze
That to no wight thou shalt this counseil wreye
ffoz it is cristes counseil that I seye
And if thou telle man thou artt forloze
ffoz this vengeaunce thou shalt han therfoze
That if thou wreye me thou shalt be wood
Quod he nay nay forbede it foz his hooly blood
Quod tho this oely man I am no labbe
Ne though I seye I am nat lief to gabbe

Gylleyn

Sey what thou wolt / I shal it nelle telle
To clerk ne wyf / by swyn that shawes helle
Quod Iohn quod Nicholas / I wol nat lye
I have yfounde / in myn astrologye
As I have looked / in the moone bright
That now a monday next / at quarter nyght
Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood
That half so greet was neuere Noes flood
This wolde he seyde / in lasse than an houre
Shal al be drevnt / so hidous is the shoure
Thus shal mankynde drenche / and lese hir lyf
This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf
And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun
For sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun
And seyde / is there no remedie in this cas
Why yis forgode / quod hende Nicholas
If thou wolt werken / after loore and reed
Thou mayst nat werken / after thyn owene heed
For thus seith Salomon / that was ful trewe
Werk al by counseil / and thou shalt nat rewe
And if thou werken wolt / by good counseil
I undertake / with outen mast / and seyl
Yet shal I saven / hir / and thee / and me
Haston nat heer / how shal we fare / quod he
Now pt oure lord / hadde pitee of swyn bifore
That al the world / pt water sholde be lorn
Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yoore ago
Haston nat heer / quod Nicholas also
The sorwe of Noe / with his felawshipe
Er pt he nyghte / bigge his ark to shipe
Him hadde be leuere / I dar wel undertake
At thilke tyme / than alle his wetheres blake
That she hadde had a shipe / hir self allone
And therfore / woostou what is best to doone
This asketh haste / and of an hastif thyng
Men may nat preche / or maken tarying
Anon go gete vs faste / in to this in
A knedyng / troghe / or ellis a kymelyn
For ech of vs / but looke pt they be large
In whiche / we mowe swymme as in a barge
And han therinne / vitaille sufficeant
But for a day / fy on the remenant
The water shal aslake / and goon away
Aboute pryme / upon the nexte day
But Robyn / may nat wite of this thy knave
Ne eek thy mayde Gille / I may nat save
Axe nat why / for though thou aske me
I wol nat telle goddes pryvetee

Thulleyo m

Suffiseth thee / but if thy wittes madde
To han as gleet a grace / as Noe hadde
Thy wyf shal & thel saluen / out of doute
Go nowe thy wey / and speed thee heey aboute
But thaun thou hast / for hyr and thee and me
ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre
Thanne shaltow hange hem / in the roof ful hye
That no man / of oure purueiaunce spye
And thaun thou thus hast don / as I have seyd
And hast oure vitaille / faste in hem yleyd
And eek an ax / to smyte the corde atwo
Thaun p^t the gabey wouth / that we may go
And broke an hole / anheigh vp on the gable
Vnto the gardyn ward / ouer the stable
That we may freely / passen forth oure way
Thaun p^t the grete shour / is goon away
Thanne shal I descryue / as wyde & vnderstake
As doth the white doke / after hyr drake
Thanne shal I clepe / hoom Alisoun / hoom Johan
Be wyse / for the flood shal passe anon
And thou shalt seyn / hayl maister Nicholay
Good morwe & go thee shal / for it is day
And thanne / shul we be lordes al oure lyf
Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf
But of o thyng / I warne thee ful right
Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght
That we ben entred / in to shippes bord
That noon of vs / ne speke nat a word
Ne clepe ne crye / but been in his preyere
For it is goddes owene heeste deere
Thy wyf and thou / moote hange fer atwynne
For that bitwixe yow / shal be no synne
Namoore in lookyng / than they shal in deede
This ordinaunce is seyd / go god thee speede
Tomorwe at nyght / whan folk ben alle aslepe
In to oure knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
Go nowe thy wey / I have no lenger space
To make of this / no lenger semblaunt
Wen seyn thus / sende the wise / and sey no thyng
Thou ast do wryte it needeth thee nat to preche
So save oure lyf / and that I the biseche
This sely carpenter / goth forth his wey
Ful ofte he seith allas and weylaway
And to his wyf / he tolde his pryuetee
And she was wo / and knew it bet than he
What al this queynte cast / was for to seye
But nathelees / she fleigh as she wolde deye

Gyldeys

And seyde Allas / go forth thy Wey anon
Help vs to scape / or we been lost echon
Anon thy tresse / wemay shedden blyf
Fro Wede spouse / and help to save ouselyf
In which a gret thyng / is affeccion
Men may dyen / of ymagynacion
So depe / may impression be take
This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake
Hym thynketh verraily / that he may see
Noees flood / come walwynge as the see
To wenchen Alisoun / his hony Wyf
He sweped / seyled / maketh hir cheyf
He siketh / and ful many a sory swogh
He goeth / and geteth hym a kneedyng trogh
And after that / a tubbe and a kymelyn
And pryvely / he sente hem to his in
And heng hem / in the roof in privetee
His owene hand made ladders thre
To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
In to the tubbes / hangynge in the balkes
And hem vitailleth / both trogh and tubbe
Ful bees and chese / and good ale in a jubbe
Suffisynge right ynogh / as for a day
But er that he / hadde maad al this array
He sente his knave / and eek his wenche also
Upon his nede / to london for to go
And on the monday / whan it drough to nyght
He shette his Dore / Withouten candel lyght
And dresseth alle thyng / as it shal be
And shortly / up they clomben alle thre
They sitten stille / wel a furlong way
Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
And clom quod John / and clom seyde Alisoun
This Carpenter / seyde his Orisoun
And stille he sit / and biddeth his prayere
Awaitynge on the reyn / if he it heere
The dede sleep / for his bisynesse
Fil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse
Aboute cokkes tyme / or litel moore
For travailled / of his goost / he groneth soore
And eft he yolketh / for his heed myslay
Down of the ladde / stalketh Nicholay
And Alisoun / ful softe adown she sprede
Withouten wordes mo / they goon to bedde
There as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
There was the revel / and the melodye
And thus Alisoun / and Nicholas
In bisynesse / of mirthe and of solas

Auctor

Tyllyes ...

Til that the belle of laudes gan to rynge
And flyges in the chaunsel gonne synge
Whis parysh clerk this amorous Absolon
That is for loue alkey so wo bigon
Up on the monday was at Osneye
With a compaignye hym to disporte and pleye
And axed up on cas a cloistrer
Ful prively after John the carpenter
And he drough hym a part out of the chirche
And seyde I moot I crough hym heere nat wirche
Syn Gatrey day I trowe that he be went
For tymbrey they ouse abbot hath hym sent
For he is wont for tymbrey for to go
And dwellen at the grange a day or two
Or elles he is at his owne reuerence
Whereof that he be I kan nat soothly sayn
This Absolon ful iolyf was and light
And thoghte now is tyme wake al nyght
For sikerly I saugh hym nat stynge
Aboute his nose syn day bigan to springe
So moot I thryue I shal at cokkes crowe
Ful pryuely knokke at his windowe
That stant ful lowe vp on his bowes wal
To Alison now wol I tellen al
my loue longynge for yet I shal nat mysse
That at the leeste eye I shal hire kysse
Som maner comfort shal I haue parfay
my mouth hath itches al this longe day
That is a signe of kissyng atte leeste
Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste
Therfore I wol go slepe an houre or tweye
And al the nyght thanne wol I wake and pleye
Whan that the firste cok hath crowe anon
Up rist this iolyf lovere Absolon
And hym arrayeth gay at poynt deuyse
But first he cheweth grene of lycorys
To smellen swete er he hadde kembd his heer
Vnder his tonge a trewe loue he beer
For therby wende he to ben gracious
He rometh to the carpenteres hous
And stille he stant vnder the shot wyndowe
Vn to his brest it raughte it was so lowe
And softe he knokketh with a semy soun
What do ye honycomb swete Alisoun
my fayre bryd my swete cynamome
Awaketh lemmman myn and rewe on me
Wel litel thynken ye vp on my wo
That for youre loue I swete ther I go

Tyrwhitt

Lo Wonder is / thogh that I shelte and shete
I moone / as dooth a lamb after the tete
ylkis lemman / I haue which loue longynge
That lik a tuytel trelle / is myn mooznynge
I may nat ete / namooze than a mayde
Lo flo the wyndoke / lakke fool she sayde
As help me god / it shal nat be compaune
I loue another / and elles I were to blame
Wel bet than thee / by thin Absolon
Go forth thy wey / or I shal caste a ston
And lat me slepe / a twenty deuel wey
Allas quod Absolon / and weylaway
That treste love / was ever so yuel biset
Thanne kys me / syn it may be no let
ffor thus love / and for the love of me
Wiltow thanne go thy wey quod she /
Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon
Thanne make thee redy / quod she I come anon
And cou to Nicholas she seyde stille
Now hust and thou shalt laughen al thy fille
This Absolon / doun sette him on his knees
And seyde / I am lord at alle degrees
ffor after this I hope ther cometh mooze
Lemman thy grace / and swete bryd thin ooze
The wyndoke / she vndoth / and that in haste
Haue do quod she / com of and speed the faste
lest that oure neighebores / thee espie
This Absolon / gan crype his mouth ful drie
Hir was the nyght as pich / or as the cole
And at the wyndoke out she putte hir hole
And Absolon / him fil no bet ne wers
But ekt his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers
fful sauorily / er he were war of this
Abak he sterte / and thoughte it were amys
ffor wel he wiste a womman hath no berd
He felte a thing al rough / and long yherd
And seyde / fy allas what have I do
Tehee quod she and clapte the wyndoke to
And Absolon / gooth forth a ful pas
A berd a berd / quod hende Nicholas
By goddes corpus / this goth faire and wel
This sely Absolon / herde every del
And on his lippe / he gan for anger bite
And to him self / he seyde I shal thee quite
Who rubbeth now / who frotteth now his lippes
With dust / with sond / with stra / with cloth / with chippes
But Absolon / that seith ful ofte allas
My soule bitake I cou to Satanas

Tyrwhitt

But me wey leuere than al this town quod he
Of this despit awroken for to be
Allas quod he allas I ne hadde yblesynt
His hoote loue was coold and al yqueynt
For fro that tyme that he hadde kist hir eris
Of pauonys he sette nat a keys
For he was heeled of his maladie
Ful ofte pauonys he gan desie
And kepe as dooth a child that is ybete
A softe pas he wente ouer the strete
Vn til a smyth men clepes dan Gerueys
That in his forge smythes plough harneys
He sharpeth shar and kultour bisily
This Absolon knokketh al esily
And seyde vnto Gerueys and that anon
What ho ayrok I am heere Absolon
What Absolon for cristes sweete tree
Why ne ye so late ey benedicite
What eyleth yow som gay gerl god it woot
Hath broght yow thus vp on the viritoot
Ey dewte rote ye woot wel what I mene
This Absolon ne roghte nat a bene
Of al his pley ne word agayn he yaf
He hadde moore tow on his distaf
Tho Gerueys knew and seyde freend so deere
That hoote kultour in the chymenee heere
As lene it me I shal the wel quite to doone
And I wol bryngе it thee agayn ful soone
Gerueys answerde certes wel it gold
Or in a poke nobles alle vntold
Thou shalt han as I am trewe smyth
Ey cristes foo what wol ye do therwith
Therof quod Absolon be as be may
I shal wel telle it thee tomorwe day
And caughte the kultour by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore he gan to stele
And wente vn to the carpenteris wal
He coughed first and knokked therwithal
Vpon the wyndowe right as he dide er
This Alison answerde who is there
That knokketh so I warante it a theef
Why nay quod he god woot my swete leef
I am thyn Absolon my deerelyng
Of gold quod he I have thee broght a ryng
My moodir yaf it me so god me save
Ful fyn it is and therto wel ygrave
This wol I yeue thee if thou me kisse
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse

And thought he wolde amenden al the jape
He sholde kisse his ers that he crape
And vp the wyndowe dide he hastily
And out his ers he puttith pryuely
Vnto the buttok to the haunche bon
And therwith spak this clerk this Absolon
Spek sweete bryd I noot nat wherfore thou art
Tho Nicholas anon leet fle a fart
As greet as it had been a thonder-dint
That with the strook he was almoost yblent
And he was redy with his iren hoot
And Nicholas amydde his ers he smoot
Of goth the skyn an hande breede aboute
The hoote kultour smoot him on his toute
And for the smert he wende for to dye
As he were wood for wo he gan to crye
Help water water help for goddes herte
Tho carpenter out of his slomber sterte
And herde oon crien water as he were wood
And thoughte allas now comth Nowelis flood
He sit him up with outen wordes mo
And with his ax he smoot the corde atwo
And down goth al he foond neither to selle
Ne breed ne ale til he cam to the celle
Vp on the floor and there aswowne he lay
For sterte hire Alison and Nicholay
And criden out harrow in the strete
The neighebores bothe smale and grete
In ronnen for to gauren on this man
That yet aswowne he lay bothe pale and wan
For with the fal he brosten hadde his arm
But stonde he moste vnto his owene harm
For whan he spak he was anon bore down
With hende Nicholas and Alisoun
They tolden euery man that he was wood
He was agast so of Nowelis flood
Thurgh fantasie that of his vanytee
He hadde ybought him kneding tubbes three
And hadde hem hanged in the roue above
And preyde hem for goddes love
To sitten in the roof par compaignye
The folk gan laughen at his fantasye
Into the roof they kiken and they gape
And turned al his harm vnto a jape
For what so par this carpenter answerde
It was for noght no man his reson herde
With othes greete he was so sworn adoun
That he was holde wood in al the toun

ffor euery dele anonright heeld with oothey
They seyde the man Cas Good my leeue Spoothey
And euery Knight gan laughen of this stryf
Thus stynued Cas this Carpenteus Syf.
ffor al his keepyng and his Ialousye
And Absolon hath kist hir nethey eye
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute
This tale is doon and god Sende al the ioute

Heere endeth the myllere his tale

The prologe of the Reues tale

Han folk has laughen at this nyce cas
Of Absolon and hende Nicholas
Diuerse folk diuersly they seyde
But for the moore part they lougse and pleyde
Ne at this tale I saugh no man hym greue
But it Were oonly Osekold the Reue
By cause he Cas of Carpenteris craft
A litel scole is in his heste ylaft
he gan to grucche and blamed it alite
So theek quod he ful Wel koude I yolle quite
With bleryng of a proud myllers eye
If that me liste speke of ribaudye
But ik am old me list no pley for age
Gras tyme is doon my fodder is nolle forage
This White top writeth myne olde yeris
myn heste is mokkels alsd as myne heris
But if I fare as dooth an Oxeneys
That ilke fynyt is euerlenig the keys
Til it be ioten in myllok or in stee
Me olde men I drede so fare We
Til We be ioten han We nat be wyse
We hoppen ay Whil that the World Wol pryse
ffor in oure Wyl they stiketh euere a nayl
To haue an hoor heed and a grene tayl
As hath a leek for thogh oure myght be goon
Oure Wyl desireth folie euere in oon
ffor Whan We may nat doon than Wol We speke
yet in oure asshen olde is fyr yreke
ffoure gleedes han We Which I shal deuyse
Auauntyng lyyng Anger Coueitise
Thise foure sparkles longen vnto eelde
Oure olde lemes moste eelde vnWeelde

But sythe me thar nat fayllen that is sooth
And yet I have alwey a coltes tooth
As many a yeer as it is passed henne
Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne
For sikerly whan I was born anon
Deeth droogh the tappe of lyf and let it gon
And ever sithe hath so the tappe yronne
Til that almoost al empty is the tonne
The stremm of lyf nowe stoppeth on the chymbe
The oolde tonge may wel wynge and chymbe
Of wrecchednesse that passed is ful yoore
With olde folk save dotage is natmoore
Whan that oure hoost hadde herd this sermoonyng
He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng
He seide what amounteth al this wit
What shul we speke alday of hooly writ
The devel made a reve for to preche
And of a countour shrewman or a leche
Sey forth thy tale and tarie nat the tyme
Lo Depeford and it is half wey prymme
Lo Grenewych there many a shrewe is inne
It were al tyme thy tale to bigynne
Now sires quod this Hostelere the reve
I pray yow alle that ye nat yow greve
Thogh I answere and sowdeel sette his howve
For leefful is with force force of showve
This gnorke wolde preve hath ytoold us heer
How that bigyles was a carpenter
Parauenture in oxen for I am oon
And therfor yow ne leve I shal hym quite anoon
Right in his cherles termes wol I speke
I pray to god his nekke mote breke
He kan wel in myn eye seen a stalke
But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke

Here biginneth the Reues tale.

At Trumpyngton nat fer fro Cantebrigge
There gooth a broke and ouer that a brigge
Upon the which brook there stant a melle
And this is verray sooth that I yow telle
A millere was ther dwellyng many a day
As any pecok he was proud and gay
Pipen he koude and fisshe and nettes bete
And turne coppes and wel wrastle and shete
And by his belt he baar a long panade
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade

A ioly poppey baar he in his pouche
Ther was no man for pil dorste hym touche
A sheffeld thwitel baar he in his hose
Round was his face and cammuse was his nose
As piles as an ape was his skulle
He was a wayket betey atte fulle
Ther dorste no wight hand vp on hym legge
That he ne sholde anon abegge
A theef he was of corn and eek of mele
And that a sly and vsaunt for to stele
His name was hoote deynous symkyn
A wyf he hadde ycomen of noble kyn
The pson of the toun hir fadey was
With hym he yaf ful many a pfunde of bras
ffor that symkyn sholde nim his blood allye
She was yfostred in a nonnerye
ffor symkyn wolde no wyf as he sayde
But if she were wel ynorissed and a mayde
To saven his estaat of yomanrye
And she was proud and pert as is a pye
A ful fair sighte was it vpon hem two
On haly dayes biforn hym wolde he go
With his typet bounde aboute his heed
And she cam after in a gyte of reed
And symkyn hadde hosen of the same
Ther dorste no wight clepen hym but dame
Was noon so hardy that wente by the weye
That with hym dorste pley or ones pleye
But if he wolde be slayn of symkyn
With panade or with knyf or bodekyn
ffor jalous folk been perilous evermo
Algate they wolde hir wyves wenden so
And eek for she was conable and coy
She was as digne as water in a dych
As ful of hoker and of bismare
Hir thoughte pt a lady sholde hir pare
That for hir kynrede and hir nortelrie
That she hadde lerned in the nonnerie
A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
Of twenty yeer with outen any mo
Savynge a child pt was of half yeer age
In cradel it lay and was a pret page
This yonge thinge and wel ygrowen was
With camuse nose and eyen greye as glas
Buttokes brode and hye pounde and hye
But right fair was hir heer I wol not lye
This pson of the toun for she was fair
In purpos was to maken hym hir heir

Vene ad

Bothe of his catel and his westage
And straunge he made it of his mariage
His purpos was for to bistowe hym hye
Fro to dom worthy blood of Auncetrye
For hooly chirches good moot been despended
Than hooly chirches blood that is despended
Therfore he wolde his hooly blood honoure
Though that he hooly chirche sholde devoure
Fleet ofte hath this gulley out of route
With shete and malt of al the land aboute
And namely they was a greet collegge
Ful clepen the Soley halle at Cantebregge
They was hir whete and eek hir malt ygrounde
And on a day it happes in a stounde
Sik lay the gaunciple on a maladye
Men wenden sikly that he sholde dye
For which this gulleye stal bothe mele and corn
An hundred tyme moore than biforn
For they biforn he stal but esily
But now he was a theef outrageously
For which the Maydyn chidde and made fare
But they of dette the gulley nat a tare
And maketh boost and ofter it was nat so
Thanne kepe they yonge povre clerkes two
That dwelten in this halle of which I seye
Testif they were and lusty for to pleye
And oonly for hir mirthe and revelrye
Up on the Maydyn bisily they crye
To yeve hem leve but a litel stounde
To goon to mille and seen hir corn ygrounde
And hardily they dorste leye hir nekke
The gulley sholde nat stele hem half a pekke
Of corn by sleighte ne by force hem reve
And at the laste the Maydyn yaf hem leve
John highte that oon and Alayn heet that oother
Of o toun were they born that highte Strother
Fer in the North I kan nat telle where
This Alayn maketh redy al his gere
And on an hors the sak he caste anon
Forth goth Alayn the clerk and also John
With good swerd and bokeler by his syde
John knew the way hem needes no gyde
And at the mille the sak adoun he layth
Alayn spak first al hayl Symond yfayth
Hou fares thy fayre doghter and thy wyf
Alayn welcome quod Symkyn by myn lyf
And John also good man how now what do ye heer
Symond quod John by god nede has na peer

Tene ~

Hym boes seme hym seme that has ma swayn
Or elles he is a fool as clerkes sayn
Ouye mancyple I hope he sal be wes
Wa betyde ay the wanges in his hees
And forthy is I come and eek alsayn
To gyyuse ouye cozn and caste it hatn agayn
I pray yow spede vs heythen that ye may
It shal be don quod symkyn by my fay
What sol ye don what shal that it is in hande
By god right by the hopnyy sal I stande
Quod John and se how that the cozn gas pu
yet saugh I neuer by my fadey tyn
how that the hopnyy wagges tal and fla
Alcyn answerde John what wa
Thanne sal I be bynethe by my crown
And se how pt the wele falles down
In to the trough that sal be my disport
ffor John yfaith I may been of youy sort
I is as ille a miller as ay ye
This miller couyled of hy nycetee
And thoghte al this nyght don but for a wyle
They sene pt no man may hem bigyle
But by my thrift yet shal I blere hy eye
ffor al the sleighte in hy philosophye
The more queynte crekes that they make
The more sol I stele and take
In stede of flour yet sol I yeue hem bren
The gretteste clerkes been noght wiseste men
As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare
Of al hy art counte I noght a tare
Out at the dore he goth ful pryuely
Whan pt he saugh his time softely
he lockth up and down til he hath founde
The clerkes hoze they as it stood ybounde
Bihynde the mille vndey a leste
And to the hoze he goth hym faste and weel
he stereth of the bridel right anon
And whan the hoze was lans he gynneth gon
To wayte the fen they wilde wayes renne
And forth with wehee thurgh thikke & thurgh thenne
This miller goth agayn no word he seyde
But dooth his note and with the clerkes pleyde
Til that hy cozn was faye and weel ygrounde
And whan the mele is sakked and ybounde
This John goth out and shut his hoze a way
And gan to cry harrok and weylaway
Our hoze is lost alayn for goddes banes
Step on thy feet com out man al atanes

Allas oure Dayeyn has his palfrey lorn
This Aleyn al forgat bothe wyle and corn
Al was out of his mynde his housbondrie
What while day is he geen he gan to crie
The fyf cam lepyng multays with a pen
She seyde allas youre hors goth to the fen
With fals mares as faste as he may go
Unthank come on his hand that bound hym so
And he pt bette whose han knyt the reyne
Allas quod Aleyn for cristes peyne
Lay down thy swerd and I wil myn allwa
I is ful sight gos raat as is a jaa
Cry gos herte he shal nat scape vs bathe
Thy nadstok out the thong un the lathe
Ihayl by gos Aleyn thou is a frounce
This sely clerkes han ful faste y pronne
To Dayes the fen bothe Aleyn and eek John
And whan the wyllyes daugh pt they were gon
He half a busshel of hir flour hath take
And bad his wyf go knede it un cake
He seyde and thorke the clerkes were a sleep
Yet han a wyllyes make a clerkes heep
For al his art now lat hem goon hir weye
Lo whey they goon ye lat the children pleye
They gete hym nat so lightly by my croun
This sely clerkes rennen up and doun
Bt keep keep stand stand Iossa warderere
Ga whistle thou and I shal kepe hym here
But- ther by til that it was verray myght
They house nat though they do al hir myght
Hir capul cacche he yan alther so faste
Til un a Dych they caughte hym atte laste
Wery and wet as beest is un the reyn
Comth sely John and bt hym comth Aleyn
Allas quod John the Day that I was born
Now are we dryve til hethyng and til scorn
Our corn is stoln me shul vs fooles calle
Bathe the Dayen and oure felawes alle
And namely the wyllyes wey la Day
Thus pleyneth John as he gooth by the Day
To Dayes the wyfe and bayard in his hous
The wyllyes cuttynge by the fyr he fond
For it was myght and forthey myghte they nogh
But for the loue of god they hym bisogh
Of herberwe and of ese as for hir peny
The wyllyes seyde again if they be eny
Such as it is yet shal ye have youre part
Myn hous is short but ye han lymes art

Pe
Pe tonne by Argumentz / make a place
A myle brood / of twenty foot of space
Let se nowe / if this place may suffise
Or make it wyden with speche / as is youre gise
Dan Symond / seyde Iohn / by seint Cutbeyrd
Ay is thou myne / and this is faire answeyrd
Thanne seyd seyd / man shal taa / of twa thinges
Dyk as he fyndes / or taa dyk as he bringes
But specially / I pray thee hoost deere
Let vs nowe mete and drynke / and make vs cheere
And he shal payen / trewely atte fulle
With empty hand / men may none hawkes tulle
Lo heere oure dyner / redy for to spende
Dis millere / in to town his doghtey sende
For Ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
And boond his two hors / it sholde nat goon loos
And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
With sheetes and with chalons / faire ydyght
Nought fro his owene bed / ten foot / or twelue
His doghtey hadde a bed / al by hir selue
Right in the same chambre / by and by
It mighte be no bet / and tause why ?
Dey was no room / hem bet to make
Dey soupen / and they speke hem to solace
And drynke ale / strong ale atte beste
Aboute mydnyght / wente they to reste
Wel hath this millere vernysshed his heed
Full pale he was for dronken / and nat reed
He yeyneth / and he speketh thurgh the nose
As he reere / on the ruafle / or on the pose
To bedde he goth / and with hym goth his wyf
As any jay / she light was and jolyf
So was hir joly whistle wel ywet
The cradel / at hir beddes feet is set
To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
And whan pt dronken / al was in the rowke
To bedde wente the doghtey right anon
To bedde wente Alein / and also Iohn
Dey nas namoore / hem needed no dwale
Dis millere / hath so wisely bibbed ale
That as an hors / he fnorteth in his sleep
Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keep
His wyf bar hym a buffon a ful strong /
Men mighte hir rowtyng heere two furlong /
The wenche rowteth eek / of compaignye
Alein the clerk / that herde this melodye
He pokes Iohn / and seyde slepestow
Herdestow ever swich a thing ere now

Yeue ¶

So thik a cokeprynge is ynel yeu alle
A kilse fly vpon thaw bodyes falle
Wha herkned euere / olyk a fesly thynge /
ye they sal haue the flouy of il endynge /
This lange nyght / they tydes me na reste
But yet nafors / al sal be for the beste
ffor John seyde he als ede most ¶ thynne
If that ¶ nay / yon kenecke kil ¶ reynne
Sou esement has lakke yshapen vs
ffor John / they is a lakke / that sayes thus
That gif a man / ui a pouit be ygreued
That ui another he sal be releued
Quse een is stolu / shortly is ne nay
And he han had an il fit al this day
And syn ¶ sal haue neen amendement /
Agayn my los / ¶ kil haue esement /
Sy god sale / it sal neen other bee
¶ This John answerde / Alayn anyse thee
The wyllep / is a pylous man he seyde
And gif that he / out of his sleep abreyde
He nyghte doun be bathe a vilenyse
Aleyn answerde / ¶ counte hym nat a flye
And up he rist / and by the kenche he crepte
This kenche lay vp nghte / and faste slepte
Til he so ny krak / er she nyghte espie
That it had been to late for to crie
And shortly for to seyn / they kepe aton
¶ Nokk ylep Aleyn / for ¶ wol speke of John
¶ his John lith stille / a furlong kep or two
And to hym self he watketh southe and so
Allas quod he / this is a kikkes japе
¶ Nokk nay ¶ seyn / thatt ¶ is but an ape
yet has my felakke / oun khatt for his hayn
He has the wylleys doghtey / ui his ayn
He auntres hym / and has his nedes spes
And ¶ lye / as a staf ek ui my bes
And khan this jape is tals another day
¶ sal been halde a daf a cokenay
¶ kil ryse / and auntre it by my fayth
Vnhardy is vnsely / thus men sayth
And vp he roos / and softely he krepte
Vn to the stadel / and in his hand it hepte
And baar it softe / vn to the bestes feet
Soone after this / the kyf hy- lokkying leet
And gan awake / and krepte hym out to pisse
And cam agayn / and gan hy- stadel mysse
And gropes heer and ther / but she foond noon
Allas quod she / ¶ habbe almoost mysgoon

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Here

I haue almoost goon to the clerkes bed
Er benedicite thanne haue I foule yfare
And forth she gooth til she the Cyrcel fond
She gropeth alkey forthey with hir honde
And foond the bed and thoghte noght but good
By cause that the Cyrcel by it stood
And nyste where she was for it was derk
But fayn and wel she creep in to the clerk
And lith ful stille and wolde han caught a sleep
With-inne a while this Iohn the clerk up leep
And on this goode wyf he leith on sore
So myrie a fit hadde she nat ful yore
He priketh harde and depe as he were mad
This wolde wyf han this two clerkes lad
Til that the thridde cok bigan to synge
Alleyn wente forth in the dawenynge
For he has wel koud al the longe nyght
And seyde fayre weel walynde unto knight
The day is come I may no lenger byde
But euere-mo wher so I go or ryde
I am thyn alder clerk wel I haue I wel
Trewe pees seinnian quod she go fayre weel
But er I go a thyng I wol thee telle
Whan that thou wendest homward by the welle
Right at the entree of the dore bihynde
Thou shalt a stake of hard a bussher fynde
That was ymaked of thyn owene meles
Which that I helpe my fader for to stele
And good seinnian god thee save and kepe
And with that word almoost she gan to wepe
Alleyn up rist and thoughte er pt it dawe
I wol go reysen in by my felawe
And found the Cyrcel with his hals anon
By god thoughte he al wrang I haue myssed on
Myn hees is toty of my owene to nyght
That maketh me that I go nat aright
I woot wel by the Cyrcel I haue myssed
Heere lith the mylleye and his wyf also
And forth he goth a twenty deuel way
Un to the bed ther as the mylleye lay
He felte hem nowe by his felawe Iohn
And by the mylleye in he crepe anon
And caughte hym by the nekke and softe he spak
He seyde thou Iohn thou swynesheed awak
For cristes sowle and heer a noble game
For by that lord that called is seint Iame
As I haue thryes in this shorte nyght
Swyned the mylleres doghter bolt upright

Whi thou hast as a coward ben agast
Tye false haylot quod the wyllyes hast.
A false tyrant false clerk quod he
Thou shalt be ded by godes dignitee
Who dorste be so bold to outrage
Thy doghter that is come of swich lynage
And by the thyrte bolle he raughte a tayn
And he hente hym despitously agayn
And on the nose he smoothym with his fest
Doun ran the blody streem upon his brest
And in the floor with nose and mouth to broke
They kaiske as dou two pigges in a poke
And up they goon and doun agayn anon
Til that the wyllyes dorned at a stoon
And doun he fil bakward upon his wyf
That wiste no thyng of this lyte stryf
For she was falle aslepe a litel wight
With Jolin the clerk that was hadde al nyght
And er the fil out of hir sleep she breyde
Help hooly croys of Bromholm she seyde
In manus tuas lord to thee I calle
Awak Symond the feend is on vs falle
myn herte is broken help I nam but ded
They lyth oon upon my doune and on myn heed
Help Symkyn for the false clerkes fighte
This Jolin styrte up as soone as ever he myghte
And gaspeth by the walles to and fro
To fynde a staf and she styrte up also
And knew the estres bet than dide this Jolin
And by the wal a staf she found anon
And saugh a litel shynesyng of a light
For at an hole in shoon the moone bright
And by that light she saugh hem bothe two
But sikerly she nyste who was who
But as she saugh a whit thyng in hir eye
And whan she gan the white thyng espye
She wende the clerk hadde weyed a volupeey
And hit the staf she sholde ay neer and neer
And wende han hit this Alayn at the fulle
And smoot the wyllyes on the pyled skulle
And doun he goth and cryde harrow I dye
Thise clerkes beete hym wel and lete hym lye
And greythen hem and tooke hir hors anon
And eek hir meele and on hir bey they gon
And at the wille yet they tooke hir cake.
Of half a bussthel flour ful wel ybake
Thus is the proude wyllyes wel ybete
And hath yloste the gryndynge of the whete

And prayes for the soper euerdeel
Of Aleyn and of John / pt bette hym weel
his wyf is ywoxen / and his doghter als
so with it is a gilley to be fals
And therfore this proude is seyd ful soth
hym thar nat reue wel / that yuele dooth
A gylour shal hym self bigyled be
And god / pt sitteth heighe in Trinitee
Save al this compaignye grete and smale
Thus have I quyt the gilley in my tale

Heere is endes the Reues tale

The prologe of the Cokes tale

The cook of london / whil that the reue spak
For ioye hym thoughte he clawed hym on the bak
Ha ha quod he / for cristes passion
This gilley hadde a sharp conclusion
Upon his argument / of herbergage
Wel seyde Salomon in his langage
Ne bryng nat every man in to thyn hous
For herberwynge by nyghte is perilous
Wel oghte a man / avysed for to be
Whom that he broghte / in to his privetee
I pray to god / so yeve me sorwe and care
If ever sitthe I highte hogge of Ware
Herde I a gilley / bettre yset a werk
He hadde a knave of malice in the derk
But god forbede / that we stynte heere
And therfore / if ye vouche sauf to heere
A tale of me / that am a povre man
I wol yow telle as wel as ever I kan
A litel jape / that fil in oure Citee
Oure hoost answerde / and seyde I graunte it thee
Now telle on Roger / looke that it be good
For many a pastee / hastow laten blood
And many a jakke of dunghe hastow sold
That hath been twies hoot / and twies cold
Of many a pilgrym / hastow cristes cors
For of thy pley yet they thee wel the wors
That they han eten / with thy stubbel goos
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos
Now telle on gentil Roger by thy name
But yet I pray thee be nat wroth for game

man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley
Thou seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey
But sooth pley quaad pley / as the fleminge seith
And therfore / Hemy saully / by thy feith
Be thou na sooth / ey Ke sepasten heer
Though that my tale / be of an hostileer
But natheles / q Kol nat telle it yit /
But ey Ke paste / yKis thou shalt be quit /
And ther Kith al / he lough and made cheere
And seyde his tale / as ye shul after-heere

Here bigynneth the Cookes tale /

Perrinis Hende / Hoom Kelle knowen alle / in oure Citee
And of a craft / of victuallers Kas hee
Gaillard he Kas as Goldfynch in the shawe
Broun as a berye / a prentys short felawe
With lokkes blake / ykembd ful fetisly
Dauncen he konde / so wel and iolily
That he Kas cleped Perkyn Reveloure
He Kas / as ful of love and paramour
As is the hyve / ful of hony sweete
Wel Kas the wenche / with hym mygHte meete
At euery bridale / Kolde he synge and hoppe
He loued bet / the Dayne than the shoppe
ffor / Kan they / any pudyng Kas in cheepe
Out of the shoppe / thider Kolde he lepe
Til that he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
And Daunced wel / he Kolde nat come ageyn
And gadered hym / a meynee of his sort /
To hoppe and synge / and maken Kith disport /
And they / they setten steuene for to meete
To pleyen at the dys in Kich a streete
ffor in the toun / nas ther no prentys
That fairer konde caste / a paire of dys
Than Perkyn konde / and ther to he Kas free
Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee
That found his maister / wel in his chaffare
ffor often tymes / he foond his box ful bare
ffor sikerly / a prentys Reveloure
That haunteth dys / Riot / or paramour /
His maistey / shal it in his shoppe abye
Al Kere he / no part of the wynnyng have
ffor thefte and Riot / they been conuertible
Al Konne he pleye on gyterne / or Rubible

Cook

Reuel and thouthe as in a lorde degree
They been ful wrothe al day as men may see
This wolȳ pupys with his maistey-hood
Til he keye ny out of his pupishood
Al keye he swybbed bothe esly and late
And countynue las with reuel to Nedegate
But atte laste his maistey-hym bithoghte
Upon a day whan he his pupy-soghte
Of a pulle that with this staues sloȝ
Wel bet is poten appul out of hooȝ
Than pt it potiȝ al the remenaunt
So fareth it by a potous seruaunt
It is wel lasse haym to lete hym pace
Than he shende alle the seruauntz in the place
Therfor his maistey yaf hym acquitaunce
And bad hym go pt sorwe and pt meschaunce
And thus this wolȳ pupys hadde his leue
Nouȝt lat hym note al the nyght oȝ leue
And foȝ they is no theef with oute a lorde
That helpeth hym to waste and to sorde
Of that he byȳde kan oȝ borde may
Anon he rente his hed and his aray
Un to a roupiey of his owene sort
That louede dys and reuel and disport
And hadde a wyf that heeld foȝ contenaunce
A shoppe and stuffed foȝ hy- countenaunce

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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+

The wordes of the Hoost to the compaignye

The hoost caught wel that the eyghte dounе
The ark of his artificial day hath ronne
The fythe part and half an houre and moore
And though he were nat set in loore
He knewe it was the eighte and twentithe day
Of April that is messager to May
And caught wel that the shadwe of every tree
Was as in lengthe the same quantitee
That was the body erect that causeth it
And therfore by the shadwe he took his wit
That phebus which pt was noon so cleer and highte
Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on highte
And for that day as in that latitude
It was ten at the clokke he gan conclude
And softely he plighte his hors aboute
Lordynges quod he I kan yow nat this route
The fourthe party of this day is gon
Now for the love of god and of seint Johan
Leseth no tyme as ferforth as ye may
Lordynges the tyme wasteth nyght and day
And stedeth fro vs that prively slepynge
And that thurgh negligence vn oute wakynge
As doth the sheep that renneth neer agayn
Destendynge fro the mountaigne in to playn
Wel kan Senec and many a philosophre
Biwaillen tyme moore than gold in coffre
For losse of catel may recovered be
But losse of tyme shendeth vs quod he
It wol nat come agayn right as biforn
Whan ich sey moore than whole wynters morwenynge
Than ich hath lost it in my childhede
Now lat vs nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse
Ye man of lawe quod he ich praye yow hertely
Telle vs a tale anon as forward is
Now ben ye enbosed thurgh your free assent
To stonden in this cas at my jugement
Acquiteth yow wel of your biheeste
Thanne have ye do your devoir atte leeste
Hoost quod he certeinly ich assente
To breke forward is nat myn entente
Biheste is dette and ich wol holde fayn
Al my biheste ich kan no better sayn

Chaucer

For ofttyme a lasse as a man yeueth another right
He sholde hym selven / vsen it by right
Thus seyde oure text / but natheles certeyn
I kan right nought / no thrifty tale seyn
That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly
On metres / and on ryming craftily
Hath seyd hem / in ofter englissh / as he kan
Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man
And if he haue nought seyd hem leue brother
In o book / he hath seyd hem in another
For he hath told / of loueres vp and doun
Mo than Ouide / made of mencioun
In his epistles / that been ful olde
What sholde I telle hem / syn they been tolde
In youthe he made / of ceyx and alcione
And sithe hath he spoken of eueryone
Thise noble wyues / and thise loueres eke
Who so that wole / his large volume seke
Cleped the seintes legende of cupide
There may he seen the large woundes wyde
Of lucresse / and of babilan Tesbee
The swerd of dido / for the false Enee
The tree of phillis / for hyr demophon
The pleynte of deianire / and of hermyon
Of adriane / and of hypsipilee
The bareyne yle / stondynge in the see
The teeris of eleyne / and the wo
Of brixseyde / and the lamentacioun
The cruelte / of the queene medea
Thy litel children / hangynge by the hals
For thy iason / that was in loue so fals
O ypsipyle / virgile / o stace
Youre bothes / he comendeth with the beste
But certeinly / no word ne writeth he
Of thilke wikke ensample of canacee
That loued hyr owene brother synfully
Of wiche cursed storie / I pray fy
Or ellis / of tyro apollonius
How that the cursed kyng / antiochus
Bynaste his doghter / of hyr maydenhede
That is / so horrible a tale for to rede
Whan he hyr threste / vp on the pauement
And therfore he / of ful auysement
Wolde neuere write / in none of his dytees
Of wiche vnkynde abhominacions
Ne I wol noon reherce / if that I may
But of my tale / how shal I doon this day

The Wife looth/ ne lyues boutelees
To wyues/ that wolen rede Pieides
wythauoyphosios/ Coot that I meene
But natheles/ I recche nought a bene
Though I come after hym/ with hawebake
I speke in prose/ and lat hym ryymes make
And with that word/ he with a sobre cheere
Began his tale/ as ye shal after heere

The prologe of the maunces tale of lacke

Hatefull harm/ condicion of pouerte
With thurst/ with colde/ with hunger so confounded
To aske helpe/ thee shameth in thyn heerte
If thou noon aske/ ne sterue amydde ystounded
That wenyt nede/ vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid
Maugree thyn heed/ thou most for indigence
Or stele/ or begge/ or borwe thy despence

Thou blamest crist/ and seyst ful bitterly
He misdepartith richesse temporal
Thy neighebore thou wytest synfully
And seyst/ thou hast tolite/ and he hath al
Parde quod he/ sire nyce and lewed man
Cristo was war/ and knew ful wel what he wan
Whan that his tayl/ shal brennen in the glede
For he nought helpeth needfully/ in hir neede

Herke what is the sentence of the wise
Bet is to dyen/ than haue indigence
Thy selue neighebor/ wol the despise
If thou be poure/ farwel thy reuerence
Yet/ of the wise man take this sentence
Alle dayes of poure men been wikke
Be war therfore/ er thou come to that prikke

If thou be poure/ thy brother hateth thee
And alle thy freendes/ fleen fro thee alas
O riche marchaunt/ ful of wele been ye
O noble/ o prudent folk/ as in this cas
Your bagges/ been nat fild with ambes as
But with sys cink/ that renneth for your chaunce
At cristemasse/ myne may ye daunce

Ye seken lond and see for yowre lyuynges
As thise folk ye knowen al thestaat
Of regnes ye seen fastes of tidynges
And tales both of pees and of debaat
I seye right nowht of tales desolaat
Seye that a wayfaryng goon is many a yeere
We taughte a tale which that ye shal heere

Heere biginneth the man of lawe his tale

Sumpye heroun dwelte a compaignye
Of chapmen riche and they to cause and ese
That kyde chiere seuten hir spicerye
Clothes of gold and satyns riche of hewe
Hir chaffare was so thriftly and so newe
That euery wight hath deyntee to chaffare
With hem and eek to sellen hem hir ware

Now fil it that the maistres of that sort
Han shapen hem to come for to reste
Heere it for chapmanhode or for disport
Noon oother message wolde they thider weste
But comen hem self to come this is the beste
And in ech place as thoughte hem auantage
For hir entente they take hir herbergage

Solempnely han this marchantz in that toun
A certein tyme as fil to hir plesance
And so bifel that thexcellent renoun
Of the emperoure doghter dame custance
Reported was with euery circumstance
Un to thise cristen marchantz in such a wyse
Fro day to day as I shal yow deuyse

This was the commune voys of euery man
Our emperour of rome god hym see
A doghter hath that syn the world bigan
To reken as wel hir goodnesse as beautee
Was neuere such another as is shee
I prey to god in honour hir susteene
And wolde she were of al europe the queene

The Clerkes tale

Ther hyd is heigh beautee with oute pryde
Yowthe with oute grenesse or folye
To alle hyd lykes ytrau is hyr gyde
Humblesse hath slayn in hyd al tyrannye
She is myrour of alle curteisye
hyr herte is verray chambre of hoolynesse
hyr hand ministre of fredam for almesse

And al this voys was soth as god is trewe
But now to purpos lat vs turne agayn
Thise marchantz han doon fraught hyr shippes newe
And whan they han this blisful mayden sayn
hoom to Surrye been they went ful fayn
And doon hyr nedes as they han doon yoore
And lyven in ese & han ey yet muchoore

Now fil it that thise marchantz stode in grace
Of hym that was the Soudan of Surrye
ffor whan they calle from any strange place
he wolde of his benigne curteisye
make hem good cheve and bisily espye
Tidynges of sondry regnes for to leve
The wondres that they myghte seen or leve

Amonges otheve thynges specially
Thise marchantz han hym told of Cristes lyf
So grete noblesse in erthe ther nys noon oother
That Crist hath caught so grete plesance
To han hyr figure in his remembrance
That al his lust and al his busy cure
Was for to lerne hym whil his lyf may dure

In Alexandre in thilke large book
Which pt men clepe the Gestes ywriten was
With stremes whan that he his bryde took
That he for love sholde han his deeth allas
ffor in the stremes clerer than is glas
Is writen goddes wreche who so kan rede
The deeth of eueryman with outen drede

In stremes many a wonder they han lysen
Was writen the deeth of Ector Achilles
Of pompei Julius er they were bore
The myght of Thebes and of Hercules
Of Sampsoun Tymbre and of Socrates
The deeth but nemmes Cristes hem so dulle
That no wight kan wel seye it atte fulle

Incipit prohemium Statii Thebaidos.
Theba[illegible]mma & Metonitis.
Deucalionee Aque[illegible]n stellis.
Hesiam species Arcadia Tyrri-
henus Phyceus Herculeusq;
vigor . . . .

This Soldan for his ꝑuee counsel sente
And shortly of this matiere for to ꝑace
he hath to hem declayed his entente
And seyde hem ekeñ but he myghte haue grace
To han Custance with inne a litel space
he nas but deed and chaysed hem ñ hye
To shapen for his lyf som remedye

Diuerse men diuerse thynges seyden
They argumenten castren vp and doun
many a subtil resoñ forth they leyden
They speken of magyk and abusioun
But finally as in conclusioun
They kan nat seen in that noon auantage
Ne in noon oother they kane mariage

Thanne spake they they inne swich difficultee
By cause of resoñ for to speke al ꝑlayn
By cause that they nas swich diuersitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes that they sayn
They trowe ꝑt no cristene ꝑynce wolde fayn
Reseyue his child vnder oure lawes sweete
That vs were taught by mahoun oure ꝓphete

And he answerde rather than I lese
Custance I wol be cristned doutelees
I moot been hires and myn noon oother chese
I prey yow hoold youre argumentz in pees
Thinketh myn lyf and beth noght rerthelees
To geten hym that hath myn lyf in cure
For in this Ro I may nat longe endure

What needeth gretter dilatacioun
I seye by tretys and embassadrie
And by the ꝓpres mediacioun
And al the chirche and al the clergie
That in destruccioun of mahoumetrie
And in encrees of cristes lawe deere
They been accorded so as ye shal heere

How that the soudan and his baronage
And alle his liges sholde ycristned be
And he shal han Custance in mariage
And eek gold and moot what quantitee
And heer to founden sufficient suretee
This same accord was sworn on either syde
Now fully Custance almyghty god thee gyde

... Lord Wolde don men wanten as I gesse
That I sholde tellen al the purviance
That theupon/ of his grete noblesse
hath shapen/ for his doghter Dame Custance
Wel may men knowen/ pt so greet ordinance
may no man tellen/ in a litel clause
As Was awayes/ for so heigh a cause

Thise shipes been shapen/ with hym for to wende
lordes/ ladies/ knyghtes of renoun
And oother folk ynogh/ this is the ende
And notifies is thurgh out the toun
That every wight/ with greet devocioun
sholde prayen thrist/ that his viage
Receyve in gree/ and spede his viage

The day is comen of hir departynge
I seye the Wofful day fatal is come
That they may bo/ no lenger tarynge
But forthwardes/ they hem dresse/ alle and some
Custance/ pt Was with sorwe al oppressed
. fful pale arist/ and dresseth hym to wende
ffor Wel she seeth/ ther is noon oother ende

Allas/ What Wonder is it though she wepte
That shal be sent/ to strange nacion
ffro freendes pt so tendrely hym kepte
And to be bounden Vnder subiection
Of oon/ she knoweth nat his condicion
Housbondes been alle goode/ and han ben yoore
That knowen Wyves/ I day seye yow namoore

Alfader she seyde/ thy Wrecches thrild Custance
Thy yonge doghter/ fostred up so softe
And yow my moodey/ my comfort in plesance
Ouer alle thyng/ out taken crist on lofte
Custance youre child/ hym recommandeth ofte
Vnto youre grace/ for I shal to dismye
Or shal I nevene/ seen yow moore With eye

Allas/ Vnto the Sarsyn nacion
I moste goon/ syn that it is youre Wille
But crist/ that starf/ for our savacion
So yeve me grace/ his heestes to fulfille
I Wrecche Wommman/ no fors/ though I spille
Women are born/ to thraldom and penance
And to been/ Vnder mannes gouvernance

Troye at Troye whan Phebus brak the wal
Of Ylion beside Thebes the Cite
Mat Rome for the hapn thurgh hanybal
That Romayns hath venquyssshed tymes thre
Mas hers with tendre herte for pite
As in the chapelle was for hyr departynge
But forth the moot they go the pepe or synge

Huse ptholomeꝰ li. i. capi. g.
Omn motꝰ celi dno sit quoꝝ
dinꝰ est q̃ mouet totū celuꝫ
ab oriente in occidentē dno
motꝰ cuꝫ orbes se ꝑ alteꝝ
do motꝰ est q̃ mouet orbem
stellatꝫ cuspidem cont motū
p̃mū videlt ab occidente in
oriente cuꝫ alios duos polosqꝫ

O fiste moeuyng crueel firmament
With thy diurnal sweigh that crokkest ay
And hyrkest al from est til occident
That naturelly wolde holde another way
Thy crokkyng set the heuene in such array
At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage
That crueel wayes hath slayn this mariage

Infortunat ascendent tortuous
Of which the lord is helpeles falle allas
Out of his angle in to the derkeste hous
O wayke o ataxy as in this cas
O feble moone unhappy been thy pas
Thou knyttest thee there thou art nat receyued
There thou hem sel fro thennes artow reyued

Duces concordati quint qdr.
elections sint debiles nisi in
diuinis habent enim isti licet
debiliteñ eoꝝ elect⁹ basicē
i. natiuitates eoꝝ q̃ cōfortat
eam planeta debile i tunc re

Opertunite of Rome allas
Was there no philosophre in al thy toun
Is no tyme bet than oothers in swich cas
Of viage is there noon election
Namely to folk of heigh condicion
Noght than a foote is of a buyrdes yknowe
Allas ye been to lewed or to slowe

To shipp is come this wofful fayre mayde
Solempnely with every circumstance
Now thu crist be with yow alle whe I seyde
Ther nys nanoyse but fare wel fare chestance
Che preyneth hym to make good contenance
And forth I lete hym sayle in this manere
And turne I hole again to my matere

The moder of the soudan whos name of sires
Espied hath hyr sones pleyn entente
How he wol lete his olde sacrifices
And right anon she for hyr conseil sente
And they been come to knowe what she mente
And whan assembled was this folk in fere
She sette hym down and sayde as ye shal here

The laste ...

Lordes quod he herde ye knowen enchon
Hoow that my sone in pount is for to lete
The hooly lawes of oure alkaron
Yeuen by gosses message makomete
But oon thoow to strete gos & sheete
The lyf shal passen out of my body streite
Than makometes lawe out of muyn heyte

What sholde we tyden of this nedle lawe
But thyaldom to oure bodies and penaunce
And after-hand in helle to be drawe
For he yeneyes shalhom oure creance
But lordes hol ye maken assuyance
As I shal seyn assentynge to my loore
And I shal make vs dauf for euermoore

They wroren and assenten euery man
To lyue with hir and dye and by hir stonde
And euerich in the beste wise he kan
To strengthen hir shal alle his frendes fonde
And she hath this empryse ytake on honde
Which ye shal heren that I shal deuyse
And to hem alle she spak right in this wyse

We shul first feyne vs cristendom to take
Tooldwatey shal nat greue vs but alite
And I shal swich a feeste and reuel make
That as I trowe I shal the sarzyn quite
For thogh his lyf be cristned neu so white
She shal haue nede to washe a-wey the lese
Thogh she a font ful watey with hir lede

Coldnesse roote of humitee
Dwago thou dwyllest the seconde
O serpent enuey-fenymyngtee
lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde
O feynes fremden al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
Ys bies in thee as nest of euery vice

Auctor ...

O sathan enuious syn thilke day
That thou fel chaces from oure heritage
Wel knowestow to women the olde way
Thou madest eua bringe vs in seruage
Thou wolt forbon this cristen mariage
Thyn instrument so weyla-wey the while
Walkestow of women whan thou wolt bigile

This soldanesse / whom I thus blame and wayte
Sleet priely / hir counseil goon hir way
What sholde I / in this tale lengen tayle
She wydeth to the soldan / on a day
And seyde hym / that she wolde reneye hir lay
And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge
Repentynge hir / olde hethen was so longe

Bisechynge hym / to doon hir that honour
That she moste han / the cristen folk to feeste
To plesen hem / and wol do my labour
The soldan seith / I wol doon at youre heeste
And knelynge thanketh hir of that requeste
So glad he was / he nyste what to seye
But graunte hir / and hem she gooth hir weye

Explicit prima pars

Sequit pars secunda

Whan was this cristen folk to londe
Cum with a greet solempne route
And hastiflich / this soldan sente his sonde
First to his wyf / and al the regne aboute
And seyde / his lyf was comen out of doute
And preyde hir / for to ryde agayn the queene
The honour of his regne / to susteene

Greet was the prees / and riche was tharaay
Of Sarsyens and Tartarien met yfeere
The moodres of the soldan / riche and gay
Receyueth hir / with also glad a cheere
As any moodre / myghte hir doghter deere
And to the nexte citee / they bisyde
A softe pas / solempnely they ryde

Thoghte thoo I / the triumphe of Julius
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a booste
Was pryvee / or moore trufles
Than was thassemblee / of this Rusful hooste
But this scorpioun / this Bibles goost
The soldanesse / for al hir flateryinge
Caste vndre / this / ful mortally to stynge

¶ Of Talbe ~

The Sotdan couth hym self soone after this
So wonally / that wonder is to telle
he welcometh hym with alle ioye and blis
And thus in mirthe and ioye / lete he dwelle
The fruyt of this matiere / is that I telle
Than tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste
The vessel stynte / and men goon to hire reste

The tyme cam / this olde Sotdanesse
Ordeynes hath this feeste / of which I telle
And to the feeste / custen folk hem dresse
In general / ye bothe yonge and olde
Keep nat men feeste and roialtee biholde
And deyntees mo / than I kan yow devyse
But al to deep / they dogh̄te it er they ryse

Sodeyn We / that euere ayt Successour
To worldly blisse / ayeyn ert bittrenesse
The ende of the ioye / of ours worldly labour
We ocupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse
Herke this counseil / for thy sikernesse
Up on thy glade day / have in thy mynde
The wikked We / or hap̄n p̄t comth bihynde.

¶ Auctor ~
¶ Ro de inopinato dolore ~
Dum mundane letitie efficia
Repentina succedit / mundana
Et felicitas nostris amaritudi
Est vestra / extrema gaudij
Luctus occupat. Audi quo stulti
Hic consilium / in die bonor
Ne immemor eris mali ~

For soothly / for to telle / at o word
The Sotdan / and the custen everichone
Been al to hewe / and stiked at the bord
But it keep sonly / Dame Custance allone
This olde Sotdanesse / cursed hone
Hath set hir freendes / boon this cursed deed
For she hir self / wolde al the contree lede

¶ Ne was Surrien noon / that was consented
That of the counsel / of the Sotdan coost
That he nas al to hewe / er he asterted
And Custance han they take anon foot hoot
And in a ship / al steerelees god woot
They han hir set / and bidden hir to seyle
Out of Surrye / again hir lond to travaille

A certein tresor / that she with hir hadde
And gooth to seyn / vitaille gret plente
They han hir yeven / and clothes eek she hadde
And forth she sailleth / in the salte see
O mury Custance / ful of benignitee
O Emperours yonge doghter deere
He that is lord of fortune be thy steere

60
x

Than

She wessheth hys and with ful pitous voys
Un to the croys of Crist thus seyde she
O cleeye o Woful auter hooly croys
Reed of the lambes blood ful of pitee
That dresshe the world fro the olde iniquitee
Me fro the feend and fro his clawes keepe
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe

Victorious tree protection of trewe
That oonly worthy were for to beye
The kyng of heuene with his woundes newe
The white lamb that hurt was with the speye
Fleemeye of feendes out of hym and heye
On which thy lymes feithfully extenden
Me helpe and yif me myght my lyf tamenden

Yeres and dayes fleteth this creature
Thurgh out the see of Grece un to the Straite
Of marrok as it was hir auenture
On many a sory meel now may she baite
After hir deth ful often may she caite
Er that the Kirke clerkes col hire dyne
Un to the place ther she shal arryne

Yen myghten aske why she was nat slayn
Eek at the feeste who myghte hir bosy save
And I answere to that demande agayn
Who saued Daniel in the horrible Cave
That every wight save he maister and knave
Was with the leon frete er he asterte
No wight but god that he bar in his herte

Wos liste to shewe his wonderful myracle
In hir for he sholde seen his mygthty werkis
Crist which that is to every harm triacle
Er ceteine wrecches ofte as knowen clerkis
Doth thynges for cetein ende that ful derk is
To mannes wit that for ours ignorance
Ne conne nought knowe his prudent purueiance

Wel wot crist she was nat at the feeste yfallen
Who kepte hir fro the drenchyng in the see:
Who kepte Jonas in the fisshes wombe
Til he was spouted up at Ninyuee:
Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
That kepte peple Israyl from hir drenchynge
With drye feet thurgh out the see passynge

¶ Of lawe ¶

¶ Who has the foure spyrites of tempest
That portrey han / tanoyen lond and see
Bothe north and south / and also west and est
Anoyeth neythey / see / ne lond ne tree
Soothly / the Comandowy of that Cas he
That flo the tempest / ayȝ this Cheuan keyte
as wel / whan she Cook / as whan she slepte

¶ Where myghte this Chouuan / mete and drynke haue :
The yeey and mooze / hoc lasteth hyr vitaillo :
Who fedde the Egyptien mayde in the Caue :
Or in deseyt :? no Cight but crist sanz faille
ffyue thousand folk / it Cas as greet mmaille
Cith loues fyue / and fisshes two to feede
God sente his foyson / at hyr grete neede

¶ She dryncth forth / in to oure Occian
Thrugh out ouys Cilde see / til atte laste
Vnder an hoold / that nempnen Inde han
ffey in northhumberlond / the Cake hyr caste
And in the sond / hyr ship / stikes so faste
That thennes Colde it noght / of al a tyde
The Eyl of crist . Cas pt she sholde abyde

¶ The constable of the castel / doun is faye
To seen his Cyab / and al the ship he soghte
And foond this Cheyf Chouuan ful of traye
He foond also / the tresor pt she broghte
In hyr langage / whych she bisoghte
The lyf / out of hyr body for to twynne
hyr to delide / of Co / that she Cas Inne

A maner latyn corrupt / Cas hyr speche
But algates / they hy Cas she vnderstonde
The constable / whan syyn syk / no lenger seche
This Coful Chouuan / broghte he to the londe
She kneleth doun / and thanketh godde conde
But what she Cas / she Colde no man seye
ffor foul ne fayr / thogh pt she sholde deye

She seyde she Cas so mazed in the see
That she forgat hyr mynde by hyr mouthe
The constable hath of hyr so greet pitee
And eek his Cyf that they kepen for routhe
She Cas so diligent / Cithouten slouthe
To serue and plese euerich in that place
That alle hyr louen / that looken in hyr face

Thus Constable / and Dame Hermengyld his wyf
Were payens / and that contree enemy
But Hermengyld / loued hir right as hir lyf
And Custance / hath so longe sojourned there
In ernest / with many a bitter teere
Til Crist / hath conuerted / thurgh his grace
Dame Hermengyld / Constablesse of that place

In al that lond / no cristen durste route
Alle cristen folk / been fled fro that contree
Thurgh payens / that conqueredem al aboute
The plages of the norrth by west and est
To Walys / fledde the Cristyanytee
Of olde Britons / dwellynge in this yle
Ther was hir refut / for the meene while

But yet were cristene Britons so exiled
That ther nere dome / that in hir prestes
Honoured crist / and hethen folk bigiled
And in the castel / ther they restesten thre
That oon of hem was blynd / and myghte nat see
But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen / whan p^t they ben blynde

Right was the sonne / as in that Souded day
For which the Constable / and his wyf also
And Custance / han ytake the righte way
Toward the see / a fletyng key or two
To pleyen / and to romen to romen to and fro
And in hir walk this blynde man they mette
Croked and old / with eyen faste yshette

In name of Crist / cride this olde Briton
Dame Hermengyld / yif me my sighte agayn
This lady / weex affrayed of the soun
Lest that hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn
Wolde hir / for thy cristes lone han slayn
Til Custance made hir bold / and bad hir preche
The wyl of Crist / as doghter of his chirche

The Constable / weex abasshed of that sight
And seyde / what amounteth al this fare
Custance answerde / sire it is cristes myght
That helpeth folk / out of the feendes snare
And so forth / she gan anon declare
That she the Constable / er- that it was eue
Conuerteth / and on Crist maketh hym bileue

¶ Of Alla k.

This constable was no thyng lord of this place
Of which I speke / they he Custance fond
But kepte it stronglÿ many ÿeres space
Vndey Alla / kyng of al Northhumbreland
That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond
Agaÿn the Scottes / as men may wel vnde
But tyme I hold / agaÿn to myn matere

¶ Satha / that ende of wrathe is to bigile
Vaugh of Custance / al his perfection
And caste anon / how he myghte quite his while
And made a yong knyght / pt Alla in that toun
Love his so hoote of foul affection
That nyght / nyn thoughte he sholde spille
But he of his / myghte ones have his wille

He wooeth his / but it availleth nought /
She wolde do no synne / by no weye
And for despit / he compassed in his thought /
To maken his / on shameful deeth to deye
He waÿteth / whan the Constable was aweye
And privyely / vpon a nyght / he crepte
In hem engÿnes thanne / whil she slepte

¶ Wery / for wakes / in his orysons
Slepeth Custance / and hem engÿn also
This knyght / thurgh Satha[n]s temptacions
Al softely / is to the bed ygo
And kitte the throte / of hem engÿn atwo
And leyde the blody knyf / by Dame Custance
And wente his wey / ther god yeve hym meschance

¶ Soone after / cometh this Constable hom agaÿn
And eek Alla / pt kyng was of that lond
And vaugh his wyf / despitously yslaÿn
For which ful ofte he wep / and wroong his hond
And in the bed / the blody knyf he fond
By Dame Custance / allas / what myghte she seye
For wraÿ wo / his wit was al aweye

¶ To kyng Alla / was told al this mischance
And eek the tyme / and weye / and in what wise
That in a ship / was founden Dame Custance
As ÿe han herd biforn / that ye han herd devyse
The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse
Whan he vaugh / so benigne a creature
Falle in disese / and in myschaunce

Cayan ...

ffor as the lomb / toRayd his deeth is broght
So staut this innocent / bifore the kyng /
This falsse kny3ht / pt hath this tresou3 wroght /
Seyth hy3 on hond / pt she hath don this thyng /
But natheles / they Was greet mourning /
Among the peple / and seyn / they kan nat gesse
That she has don / so greet a wikkednesse

ffor they / han seyn hy3 eyen so stuous
And louynge hemengyld / right as hy3 lyf /
Of this baby Witnesse / euerich in that hous
Save he / pt hemengyld / clokk Rt his knyf /
This gentil kyng / hath caught a greet motyf
Of this Witnesse / and thoghte he wolde enquere
Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere

Allas Custance / thou hast no champioun
Ne fighte kanstow noght / so Wey lawey
But he / that stalf for our redempcioun
And boond Sathan / and yet lith they he lay
So be thy strouge champion this day
ffor but if crist / open myracle kithe
Wtouten gilt / thou shalt be slayn as Withe

She sit hy3 doun on knees / and thus she sayde
Immortal god / that Savedest Susanne
ffro fals blame / and thou merciful mayde
mayde Ianeue / doghter to Seint Anne
Before Whos child / angeles synge osanne
Iff I be giltles / of this felonye
my socour be / for ellis shal I dye

Have ye nat seyn / somtyme a pale face
Among a prees / of hym pt hath be lad
Toward his deeth / Wher as hym gat no grace
And Wich a colour / in his face hath had
Wen myghte knowe / his face that Was bistad
Amonges alle the faces / in that route
So stant Custance / and lokketh hy3 aboute

Queenes lyuynge in prosperitee
Duchesses / and ladyes euerichone
hauneth don pouthe / on hy3 Assistee
An emperoures doghter / stant allone
She hath no Wight / to Whom to make hir mone
O blood royal / that stondest in this drede
ffer been thy freendes / at thy grete nede

This Alla kyng hath wrich compassion
As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee
That from his eyen lan the water doun
Bad hastily do ferche a book quod he
And if this knyght wol ought hem hold pt she
This Mamutin olde, yet wol he vs auyse
Whom pt he wold, that ought been oure iustise

A Briton book writen with Romayns
Was fet, and on this book he sworen anoon
The gilty was, and in the newe chayes
An hauns hym smoot vpon the nekke boon
That doun he fil atones as a stoon
And bothe his eyen brosten out of his face
In sighte of euery body in that place

A Voys was herd in generall Audience
And seyde thou hast desclaundred giltelees
The doghter of holy thrysse in heigh presence
Thus hastou doon, and yet holde I my pees
Of this meruaille, agast was al the prees
As matzes folk they stoden euerychone
For drede of wreche, ne dorste no word allone

Swete was the drede, and eek the repentance
Of hem, that hadden wrong suspecion
Vpon this oldy innocent Custance
And for this miracle in conclusion
And by Custances mediacion
The king and many another in that place
Converted was, thanked be cristes grace

This false knyght was slayn for his untrouthe
By Iuggement of alla hastifly
And yet Custance, hadde of his deth greet louthe
And after this Crist of his mercy
Made alla wedden ful solempnely
This holy mayden, that is so bright and shene
And thus hath crist ymaad Custance a queene

But who was woful, if I shal nat lye
Of this weddyng but Donegild and nanne
The kynges mooder, ful of tyrannye
Hir thoughte, hir cursed herte brast atwo
She wolde nought hir sone had do so
Hir thoughte a despit, that he sholde take
So straunge a creature vnto his make

The lyst nat of the chaf / or of the stree
Maken so long a tale as of the corn
What sholde I telle / of the roialtee
At maryages / or which coys goth biforn
Who bloweth in the trumpe / or in an horn
The fruyt of euery tale / is for to seye
They ete & drynke / & daunce / & synge & pleye

They goon to bedde / as it was skile and right
For thogh pt wyues / be ful hooly thynges
They moste take / in pacience at nyght
Swiche maner necessaries / as been pleasynges
To folk / pt han ywedded hem with rynges
And leye aslite / hir hoolynesse aside
As for the tyme / it may no bet bitide

On hir he gat / a knaue child anon
And to a bisshop / and his Constable eke
He took his eyr to kepe / whan he is gon
To Scotlond-ward / his foomen for to seke
Ther fore this Custance / that is so humble and meke
So longe is goon with childe / til that hir stille
She halt hir chambre / abidyng cristes wille

The tyme is come / a man child she bereth
Mawmetrie at the font-stoon / they hym calle
This Constable / dooth forth come a messagere
And wroot vn to his kyng / that recreed was alle
How that this blisful tidyng / is bifalle
And othere tidynges / spedeful for to seye
He taketh the lettre / and forth he gooth his weye

This messager / to doon his auantage
Vnto the kynges moodes / redeth or rede
And saluweth hym ful fayre in his langage
Mawmet quod he / ye may be glad and blithe
And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe
Youre lady queene / hath child with outen doute
To ioye and blisse / to al this regne aboute

Lo heere the lettres / seled of this thyng
That I moot bere / with al the haste I may
If ye vouche sauf / on to youre sone the kyng
I am youre gyaunt / bothe nyght and day
Doneguld answerde / as nolde at this tyme nay
But heere al nyght / I vouche sauf to reste
Tomorwe / god I seye thee / what me leste

Of Talke ...

This messager dranke ouerly ale and wyn
And stolen keye hise lettres prynely
Out of his boy / whil he sliep as a stryn
And countrefetes wel ful subtilly
Another lettre / wroght ful synfully
On to the kyng direct / of this matere
Fro his Constable / as ye shal after here

The lettre spak / the queene delyuered was
Of so horrible a feendly creature
That ny the kastel noon so hardy was
That any while dorste ther-endure
The mooder was an Elf by auenture
Ycomen / by charmes / or by sorcerie
And euerich / hateth hir-compaignie

Now was this kyng / whan he this lettre had sayn
But to no wight / he tolde his sorwes sore
But of his owene hand / he wroot agayn
Welcome the sonde of crist / for euermore
To me / that am most levnes in his lore
Lord / welcome be thy lust / and thy plesance
My lust / and putte al in thyn ordinance

Keepeth this child / al be it foul or fey
And eek my wyf / for to my yoom comynge
Crist wroght hir lif / may sende me an hey
Whoore agreable than this to my likynge
This lettre he closeth prively / and stynge
Which to the messager / was take soone
And forth he gooth / ther-is namoore to doone

Auctor ...

The messager / fulfild of dronkenesse
Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay
And thou bewreyest / alle secreenesse
Thy mynde is lorn / thou jangles as a jay
Thy face is turned / til a newe array
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route
Ther is no conseil hyd / with outen doute

Quis turpis ebriosi / cui fetor
ni ore tremor in corpore / qui-
git mist stulta / gerit occulta / cui
mens alienat / facies trans-
format / unlla cuius tactet
secretu / vbi regnat ebrietas ...

Donegild / I nel haue noon englissh digne
Vn to thy malice / and thy tyrannye
And therfore to the feend I thee resigne
Let hym endyten / of thy traitorie
Ay manyssh fly / o nay by god I lye
Ay feendlych spirit for I day wel telle
Thogh thou here talke / thy spirit is in helle

¶ This messagey/ comth fro the kyng again
And at the kynges moodres court he lighte
And she was/ of this messagey ful fayn
And plesed hym/ in al that eir she myghte
He drank/ and wel his gyrdel vnderpighte
He sleepeth/ and he snorteth in his gyse
Al nyght/ til the sonne gan aryse

Eft were hise lettres stolen erlychon
And counterfeted lettres in this wyse
The king commandeth/ his Constable anon
Vp peyne of hangyng/ and on heigh Iuyse
That he ne sholde/ suffren in no wyse
Custance/ in with his kenrne for tabyde
Thre dayes/ and o quartey of a tyde

But in the same schip/ as he hir fond
Hir and hir yonge sone/ and al hir geere
He sholde putte/ and croude hir fro the lond
And charge hir/ she nevereft/ come there
O wery Custance/ wel may thy goost have feere
And sleppynge in thy dreem/ been in penance
When Donegild/ cast al this ordinance

¶ This messagey on morwe/ when he took
Vn to the Castel/ hath the weyte way
And to the Constable/ he the lettre took
And when pt he this pitous letter say
Ful ofte he seyde/ allas and weylaway
Lord crist quod he/ how may this world endure
So ful of synne/ is many a creature

O mighty god/ if that it be thy wille
Sith thou art rightful Iuge/ how may it be
That thou wolt suffren/ innocentz to spille
And wikked folk/ regnen in prosperite
O goode Custance allas so wo is me
That I moot be thy tormentour or deye
On shames deth/ they is noon other weye

Wepen both yonge and olde in al that place
When pt the kyng this cursed lettre sente
And Custance/ with a deedly pale face
The fourthe day/ toward hir ship she wente
But nathelees/ she taketh in good entente
The croys of crist/ and kneelynge on the stronde
She seyde lord/ ay wel come be thy sonde

¶ of Lauke ...

He that me kepte / fro the false blame
Whil I was on the lond amonges yow
He kan me kepe / from shame / and eek fro shame
In caste see / al thogh I se noght now
As strong as ever he was / he is yet now
In hym myste I / and in his moodey deede
That is to me / my deeth / and eek my heede

Hir litel child / lay weping in hir barm
And knelynge / pitously / to hym she seyde
Pees litel sone / I bisech thee mercy
Let that thy cruelnesse / and thy greet manace
Be some refresshyng / to my wo and my pyne
Allas I fostred thee right tendrely
And now thou litel wrecche / how dostow now
And why loken thyne eyen so wantrously
And with thy litel armes / so pitously
Wostow me ought / why nilt thou loken on me
Wostow wel child / that I am guilteless

Mooder quod she / and maydes blisful mane
Sooth is / that thurgh wommanes eggement
Man hath bothe bought and sold and bought ay to dere
For which thy child was on a cros yslayn
Thy blisful eyen / myghte al his torment
Thanne is there no comparison bitwene
Thy wo / and any wo / man may sustene

Thou sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen
And yet nolde / lyneth my child yfay
Nolde lady bright / to whom alle sorwful crien
Thou glorie of wommanhede / thou faire may
Thou haven of refut / bright sterre of day
Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse
Reweth / on ech wight that of thee wil blesse

O litel child / allas what is thy gilt
That nedest shamful deeth / as yet to fle
What wilt thou seyn hadde fader / thee aquit
O mercy deere constable quod she
As wolde my litel child / wel hope with thee
And if thou darst nat / answer him for shame
Yet kys him ones / in his fadres name

Ther with / she looked bakward to the londe
And seyde / farewel housbonde sothelees
And up she ist / and walketh doun the stronde
Toward the ship / hir forweth al the pees
And ever she preyeth hir child / to holde his pees
And taketh hir leve / and with an hooly entente
She blisseth hir / and into ship she wente

Vitaulles was the chyf / it is no drede
Habundantly / for hys ful longe space
And otheye necessaryes / that sholde nede
She hadde ynogh / heyyes be goddes grace
ffor Wynd and Wedey / almyghty god purchace
And bryngе hys hoom / I kan no bettre seye
But in the see / she dryncth forth hir weye

Explicit secunda pars

Incipit pars tercia

Als the kyng / comth hoom soone after this
On to his castel / of the which I tolde
And asketh / Where his wyf / and his child is
The constable / gan aboute his herte colde
And pleynly / al the manere he hym tolde
As ye han herd / I kan telle it no bettre
And sheweth the kyng / his seel and his lettre

And seyde lord / as ye comanded me
Vp peyne of deeth / to haue I woot ful wel
This message / tormented was ful sore
Wyste bi nyghte / and telleth pryvee and pleyn
ffro nyght to nyght / in what place he has leyn
And thus by Wit / and sotil enquerynge
Ymagines was / by whom this harm gan springe

The hand was knokke / that the lettre brought
And al the venym / of this cursed werk
Lyth in the hilte / evenly I noot
Theffect is this / pt alla out of derk
his moodey wyf / that may wel pleynly werk
ffor pt olde traitour was to hir ligeance
Thus endeth olde Donegild / with meschance

The sorwe that this alla / nyght and day
Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also
They is no tonge / that it telle may
But nov wol I / vn to Custance go
That fleteth in the see / in peyne and wo
ffyue yeer and moore / as liked cristes sonde
Er that hir ship / approches vn to the londe

¶ of laste ..

Vndey an yethen castel, atte laste
Of which the name, ñ my text nought I fynde
Custance, and eek hy child, the eke vp taste
Almyghty god, that cares al mankynde
Haue on Custance, and on hy child com mynde
That fallen is, ñ hethen hand eft soone
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone

¶ Doun fro the castel, couth they many a knight
To gauren on this ship, and on Custance
But shortly, from the castel on a nyght
The lordes styward, god yeue hym meschance
A theef, that hadde yeneyed ony chance
Cam ñ to the ship allone, and seyde he sholde
Hy lemman be, whey so she wolde or nolde

¶ Wo was this wrecched woman tho bigon
Hy child crie, and she cride pitously
But blisful mayde, heelp hy ñght anon
For with hy strugling, wel and myghtily
The theef fil ouey bord al sodeynly
And ñ the see, he dreynte for vengeance
And thus hath crist ywrokken kept Custance

¶ Auctor ..

O foule lust of luxurie, lo thyn ende
Nat only, that thou feyntest mannes mynde
But verraily, thou wolt his body schende
Thende of thy werk or of thy lustes blynde
Is ful sorweful, how many on may men fynde
That nought for werk sou tyme, but for thentente
To soon this synne, been outhey slayn or shente

¶ O extrema libidinis tyrannis
que non solu mentem effe
minat, set etiam corpa violat
semp sequit dolor & penitencia post &c

Holy may this Cayser Woman, han this strengthe
Hy to defende, agayn this renegat
O Golias, vnmesurable of lengthe
How myghte Dauid, make thee so maat
So yong, and of stature so desolaat
How dorste he looke, vp on thy hedful face
Wel may men seen, it was but goddes grace

¶ Who yaf Judith, corage or hardynesse
To sleen hym Olofeme, ñ his tente
And to delyueren, out of wrecchednesse
The peple of god, I seye for this entente
That right as god, spirit of vigour sente
To hem, and saues hem, out of meschance
So sente he myght and vigour to Custance

Forth gooth hir ship thurgh out the narwe mouth
Of Jubaltar and Septe Ispaynge alway
Sometyme West and sometyme North and South
And sometyme est ful many a fayr day
Thus cristes moodey blessed be she ay
Hath shapen thurgh hir endeles goodnesse
To make an ende of al hir heynesse

But lat us stynte of Custance but a throwe
And speke we of the Sowdayn Surrye
That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe
The slaughtre of cristen folk and dishonowr
Doon to his doghtyr by a fals traytowr
I mene the cursed Wikked sodanesse
That at the feeste slee bothe moore & lesse

For which this Emperour hath sent anon
His Senatour with ryal ordinance
And othere lordes god woot many oon
On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance
They brennen slee and bynge hem to meschance
Ful many a day but shortly this is thende
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to wende

This Senatour repayreth with victorie
To Rome-ward sailynge ful roialli
And wente the ship dryvynge as seith the storie
In which Custance sit ful pitously
No thyng knew she what she was no why
She was in swich array ne she nyl seye
Of hir estaat thogh she sholde deye

He bryngeth hir to Rome and to his wyf
He yaf hir and hir yonge sone also
And with the Senatour she ladde hir lyf
Thus kan our lady bryngen out of wo
Wofful Custance and many another mo
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes ever-mo as was hir grace

The Senatours wyf hir Aunte was
But for al that she knew hir neer the moore
She nol no lenger tarien in this cas
But to kyng Alla which I spak of yoore
That wedeth for his wyf and sixeth soore
I nol retourne and lete I nol Custance
Under the Senatours governance

Kyng alla, whych that hadde his moodey slayn
Upon a day fil in swich repentance
That if q shortly tellen shal and playn
To Roms he couth, to receyuen his penance
And putte hym in the popes ordinance
In heigh and legh and thin ost bisoghte
Foryeue his wikked deydes pthe thoghte

The fame anon thurgh out the toun is born
How alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage
Ey herbergeouns that Kenten hym biforn
For which the Senatour as was vsage
Rood hym agayns and many of his lynage
As wel to shewen his heighe magnificence
As to doon any kyng a reuerence

Gret cheere dooth this noble Senatour
To kyng alla and he to hym also
Euerych of hem dooth oother gret honour
And so bifel that vpon a day or two
This Senatour is to kyng alla go
To feste and shortly if q shal nat lye
Custances sone Kente in his compaignye

Comen wolde seyn at reuerence of Custance
This Senatour hath las this child to feeste
I may nat tellen eueryy circumstance
Be as be may they was he at the feeste
But sooth is this that at his moodres heeste
Biforn alla duryng the metes space
The child stood lookyng in the kynges face

This alla kyng hath of this child gret wonder
And to the Senatour he seyde anon
Who is that fayre child that stondeth yonder:
I noot quod he by god and by seint Johan
A moodey he hath but fadey hath he noon
That I of woot but shortly in a stounde
He tolde alla how that this child was founde

But god woot quod this Senatour also
So verrayly as I stande in myn hyf
Me thynketh I neuere as yit ne herde of no
Of worldly wommen may be ne of wyf
I dar wel seyn hir hadde neuere a knyf
Thurgh out hir brest than ben a woman wikke
They is no man koude bityng hir to thatte prikke

Tyan

Now Cas this chyld as lyȝt on to Custance
As possible is a creatuȝe to be
This Alla hath the face in ȝemembrance
Of Dame Custance and they on musede he
If that the childes mooder Ceȝe aught eho
That is his Cyf and pryuely he ȝighte
And opesde hym eho the table that he myghte

Pfaȝ thoghte he fantome is in myn heed
Foghte Ceme of skilful ȝuggement
That in the Caste see my Cyf is deed
And afteȝkaȝd he made his Argument
Cthat Coot ȝ if that Cryst haue hyder ȝsent
my Cyf hy see as Cel as he hym ȝente
To my contree eho themes that she Ceute

And aftey ȝoon hoom Cith the Senatouȝ
Goth Alla foȝ to seen this Condey chaunce
This Senatouȝ dooth Alla greet honouȝ
And hastifly he ȝente aftey Custaunce
But tȝusteth Ceel hym liste nat to daunce
Shan pt eho Ciste Cheyfoȝe Cas that coude
Dimeths Up on hyȝ feet eho myghte stonde

Shan Alla caught his Cyf faiȝe he hym ȝrette
And Ceep that it Cas youthe foȝ to see
ffoȝ at the fyfte look he on hym sette
he knewe Cel veyrily that it Cas she
And eho foȝ ȝoȝke as doumb staut as a tree
So Cas hyȝ herte shet in hyȝ distresse
Shan she remembred his vnkyndenesse

Weyes she wolkned in his offense sighte
he Ceep and hym excuseth pitously
mooste god quod he and hise halwes bryghte
So wisly on my soule as haue mercy
That of youȝe shame as giltees am I
As is ryaunce my sone so lyk youȝe face
Elles the feend me feccheth out of this place

Long Cas the sobbyng and the bittey preyne
Er that hyȝ Cofull hertes myghte cesse
Greet Cas the pitee foȝ to heeȝe hem pleyne
Thogh Cheche pleintes gan hyȝ eho encresse
I pray yoȝ alle my labouȝ to release
I may nat telle hyȝ Co/ vn til to moȝwe
I am so Ceyy foȝ to ȝpeke of soȝwe

But finally whan that the sothe is kist
That alla giltles was of hy wo
I trowe an hundred tymes been they kist
And with a blisse is they bitwix hem two
That saue the wyf that lasteth ednemo
They is noon lyk that any creature
Hath seyn or shal whil pt the world may dure

Tho preyse she hir housbonde mekely
In relief of hir longe pitous pyne
That he wolde preye hir fadey specially
That of his mageste he wolde enclyne
To vouche sauf doun dai pt hym to dyne
She preyse hym eek he wolde by no weye
Out to hir fadey no word of hir seye

Doun wen wolde seyn hoo pt the child nyste
Dooth this message vn to this Emperour
But as I gesse alla was wat so wyse
To hym that was of so parfyt honour
As he that is of cristen folk the flour
Seute auy child but it is bet to deme
He deute hym self and so it may wel seme

This Emperour hath graunted gentilly
To come to dyner as he hym bisoughte
And wel ysee I he lookes busily
Up on this child and on his doghtey thoghte
Alla goth to his in and as hym oghte
Arrayes for this feste in euery wise
As ferforth as his conuyng may suffise

The morwe cam and alla gan hym dresse
And eek his wyf this Emperour to meete
And forth they ryde in ioye and in gladnesse
And whan she cam hir fadey in the strete
She lighte doun and falleth hym to feete
ffadey quod she youre yonge child Custance
Is hool ful clene out of youre remembrance

I am youre doghtey Custance quod she
That whilom ye han sent vn to Surrye
It am I fadey that in the salte see
Was put allone and damned for to dye
Mooste goode fadey mercy I yow crye
Send me namoore vn to noon hethenesse
But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndenesse

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x

Who kan the peyns woye telleu al
Bitwixe hem thre/ oyn they been thus ymette
But of my tale/ make an ende ¶ shal
The day goth faste/ ¶ wol no lenger lette
This glade folk to dyuey they hem sette
In woye and blisse/ at mete ¶ lete hem welle
A thousand foold/ wel mooze than ¶ kan telle

This child maurice was oriseu emperour
Was by the pope and lyues enstently
To enstes thynche he vide sweet honour
But ¶ lete al his storie passen by
Of custance is my tale specially
In the olde romayn geestes may men fynde
Maurices lyf/ ¶ here it nought vn̄ myndе

This kyng alla/ whan he his tyme say
With his custance his hooly wyf so sweete
To Engelond been they come the nyghte day
Ther as they lyue vn̄ woye and vn̄ quiete
But litel while it lasteth ¶ ioye heete
Joye of this world/ for tyme wol not abyde
Me say to myght it changeth as the tyde

Who lyued euere vn̄ erthe delit o day
That hym ne moeued outhey conscience
Or ire/ or talent/ or envy hym assay
Enuye/ or pryde/ or passion/ or offence
¶ ne seye but for this ende this sentence
That litel while vn̄ woye or vn̄ plesance
Lasteth the blisse of alla with custance

For deeth that taketh of heigh and logh his rente
Whan passed was a yeer euene as I gesse
Out of this world this kyng alla he hente
For whom custance hath ful sweet heuynesse
Nought lat vs prayе to god his soule blesse
And dame custance finally to seye
To rome is come this hooly creature

To rome is come this hooly creature
And fyndeth hym freendes hoole and sounde
Nought is ye she escaped al hyr auenture
And whan yt she hyr fader hath yfounde
Down on hyr knees falleth she to grounde
Wepynge for tendrenesse vn̄ herte blithe
She heryeth god an hundred thousand sythe

In manus tuas dñe commendo spm meam redemisti me dñe deus veritatis

Os iusti ducet die totum
Duxit vn̄ sua dilectoe iocunda
Que vn̄ aliqua pte diei letitiis
Cōscientie vel impetu que vel
Motu concupiscencie non ebria
Fuit/ que finiat iuuidie vel av
Ar auaricie/ vel timor cup
Bie non vexauerit/ que aliqua
Actiua vel offensa/ vel passio
Non cōmouerit ꝛc

Thu veystu, and goodly Alnus dese
They lyuen alle, and nesse a sondry Kynde
Til deeth sepastes hem, this lyf they lese
And fadeth now Crist, my tale is at an ende
Now thu Crist, that of his myght may sende
Joye after Go, gouerne vs in his grace
And kepe vs alle, that been in this place Amen ¶

Here endeth the tale of the man of lasse ¶

The prologe of the wyues tale of Bathe ¶

Experience, though noon Auctoritee
Were in this World, were nght ynogh to me
To speke of Wo, that is in maryage
For wordynges, sith I .xij. yeer was of age
Ythonked be god, that is eterne on lyue
Housbondes at chirche dore I haue had fyue
For I so ofte, haue ywedded bee
And alle, Were worthy men in hir degree
But me was told ofeyn, nat longe agoon is
That sith that Crist, ne Went nevre but onis
To Weddyng, in the Cane of Galilee
Ey the same ensample, thoughte me
That I ne sholde, wedded be but ones
Herkne eek, Which a sharp word for the nones
Besyde a Welle, Jhus god and man
Spak, in repreeue of the Samaritan
Thou hast yhad, fyue housbondes quod he
And that man, the Which, pt hath nowe thee
Is nogh thyn housbonde, thus seyde he certeyn
What that he meente they by, I kan nat seyn
But pt I seye, Why that the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan
How manye, myghte she han in mariage
Yet herde I nevere tellen in myn age
Upon this nombre diffinicioun
Men may deuyne, and glosen vp and doun
But wel I woot, expres Without lye
God bad vs, for to Wexe and multiplye
That gentil text, kan I wel vnderstonde
Eek wel I woot, he seyde myn housbonde
Sholde lete fader and mooder, and take me
But of no nombre, mencioun made he

In Cana Galilee ¶

Tam enim fuerunt isti quam impares, fuerunt semel esse nubendi ¶

Non est bonum mundum diffinitum
quia pingrauit, quia habent vxores
ac sint tanquam non habentes

Crescite & multiplicamini ¶

Of bigamye / or of Octogamye
Why sholde men / speke of it vilonye
To heese / the Wise kyng / dan Salomon
I trowe / he hadde Wyues / mo than oon
As Wolde god / it were leueful vn to me
To be refresshed / half so ofte as he
Which yrfte of god / hadde he / for alle his Wyues
No man hath swich / p^t in this World alyue is
Nor Noot / this noble kyng / as to my Wit
The firste nyght / had many a myle fit
With ech of hem / so Wel Was hym on lyue
Yblessed be god / that I haue Wedded fyue
Welcome the sixte / whan ever he shal
For soothe / I Wol nat kepe me chaast in al
Whan myn housbonde / is fro the World ygon
Som cristen man / shal Wedde me anon
For thanne / thapostle seith / I am free
To Wedde a goddes half / where it liketh me
He seith to be Wedded / is no synne
Bet is to be Wedded than to brynne
What reketh me / though folk seye vilonye
Of shrewed lamech / and of bigamye
I Noot Wel abraham / was an hooly man
And jacob eek / as fer forth as I kan
And ech of hem / hadde Wyues mo than two
And many another man also
Whanne shal he vsen his mariage
Thy expres Word / I pray yow telleth me
Or where / comanded he virginitee
I Noot as Wel as ye / it is no drede
Whan thapostel / speketh of maydenhede
He seyde / that precept / they of hadde he noon
Men may conseille / a Womman to been oon
But conseilling / is nat comandement
He putte it / in oure oWene Jugement
For hadde god / comanded maydenhede
Thanne hadde he dampned Wedding / with the dede
And certeyn / if they Were / no seed ysowe
Virginitee / Wher of thanne shulde it growe
Poul / ne dorste nat / comanden atte leeste
A thyng / of Which his maister yaf noon heeste
The Wyl is set Vp / of Virginitee
Cacche Who so may / Who renneth best lat see
But this Word / is nat taken of every Wight
But there / as god lyst / yyue it of his myght
I Noot Wel / the Apostel / Was a mayde
But nathelees / though / that he Wroot and sayde

Si aute no cotinent nubant ~

Quos sors mouet / vir ei libatu
est / cui vult nubat in dno ~
Si accepis vxorem no peccasti.
et si nupsit virgo no peccauit
set hic q^d dno se coniungit fit vnus
Melius est nubere q̃ vri ~
Dicunt q^d p^ma nupcie virtus bigamia
Sanguinaptus & homicidii est ee
Abrahã trigamus ~
Jacob quatrigamus ~

Dauid / se virginit̃ p̃cepti
no fuit consiliu dicit̃ ee

Dimittat as cassi tenet nu-
mum priscinitatis bigam̃
si potest capere capiat ee

The Wolde t ech Wight / Wel Wich as he
Alwys hnt conseil to Wyfmittee
And for to been a Wyf he yaf me lene
Of Indulgence / so it is no repreue
To Wedde me / if myn make dye
With outen / exception of Bigamye
Al Were it good / no Woman for to touche
He mente / as vn his bed / or vn his touche
ffor paul is / bothe fyr and tok tassemble
ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble
This is al and som / that Virginitee
Wooze profiteth / than Wedding / vn fleletee
ffleletee clepe I / but if that he and she
Wolde lede / al hir lyf vn chastitee
Voluntate it Wel / I haue noon envie
Thogh maydenhede preme Bigamye
Hem liketh to be clene / body and gooste
Of myn estaat / I nyl nat make no booste
ffor Wel ye knowe / a lord vn his houshold
He hath nat euery Vessel / al of gold
Some been of tree / and Won hir lord wel myse
God clepeth folk to hym / vn sondry Wyse
And euerich hath of god a propre yifte
Som this som that / as hym liketh shifte
Virginitee / is grect perfection
And continence eek / with deuocion
But crist / that of perfection is welle
Bad nat euery Wight / sholde go selle
Al that he hadde / and gyue it to the poore
And in Wich Wise / folwe hym and his fooze
he spak to hem / that Wolde lyue parfitly
And bredynges hy / youre lyues / that am nat I
I Wol bistowe / the flouv of myn age
In the actes / and in fruyt of mariage
Telle me also / to What conclusion
Were membres ymaad / of generacion
And for What profit / Was a Wight ywroght
Trusteth right Wel / they Were nat maad for noght
Glose Who so Wole / and seye bothe vp and down
That they Were maad / for purgacioun
Of vrine bothe / and thynges smale
And eek to knowe / a femele from a male
And for noon other cause / Wey ye no?
The experience / woot Wel it is noght so
So that the clerkes / be nat wt me Wrothe
I seye yis / that they beth maked for bothe
That is to seye / for office and for ese
Of engendrure / they Were nat god dispese

Questio ~

Volo autem omnes homines esse
sicut meipsum ~ ~ ~

Bonum est homini muliere no tangere ~

Quia si non potuerint se continere
nubant. melius enim est nubere
quam uri. ~ ~ ~

Wyf ...

Thy sholde men elles / in hir bookes sette
That a man shal yelde to his Wyf hir dette
Now wherwith / sholde he make his payement
If he ne yelde his sely Wif his dewement
Thamme Weye they maad / up on a creature
To purge Uryne and for engendrure
But I seye nought / pt every Wight is holde
That hath werk hameys as I of tolde
To goon and usen hem in engendrure
They shul nat take / of chastitee no cure
Crist was a mayde / and shapen as a man
And many a seint / with the Wordes bigan
Yet lyves they ever / in pfit chastitee
I nyl nat envye / no singularitee
Let hem be breed / of pured Whete seed
And let us Wynes / hoten barly breed
And yet / With barly breed / mark telle kan
Oure lord / refresshed many a man
In swich estaat / as god hath cleped us
I Wol pseuere / I nam nat perfit
In Wyfhode / I Wol use myn instrument
As frely / as my makere hath it sent
If I be daungerous / god yeve me sorwe
Myn housbonde shal it have / bothe eve & morwe
Whan pt hym list / com forth & paye his dette
An housbonde I Wol have / I nyl nat lette
Which shal be / bothe my dettour / and my thral
And have his tribulacion With al
Upon his flesh / whil I am his Wyf
I have the power / during al my lyf
Upon his propre body / and nought he
Right thus / the Apostel / tolde it me
And bad oure housbondes / for to love us Weel
Al this sentence / me liketh every deel
Up stirte the pdoner / and that anon
Abyde quod he / by god & by seint John
Ye been a noble prechour / in this cas
I Was aboute / to Wedde a Wyf alas
What sholde I bye it on my flesh so deere
Yet hadde I levere / Wedde no Wyf to yeere
Abyde quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
Nay / thou shalt drinken of another tonne
Er that I go / shal savoure Worse than ale
And Whan pt I have told forth my tale
Of tribulacion that is in maryage
Of Which / I am expert / in al myn age
This to seyn / my self / have been the whippe
Than may'st thee / Whether thou Wolt suppe

Ita vocatae quia vocatu estis ut

Quia Christus pro nobis passus est relinquens nobis exemplum ut sequamini vestigia ejus qui peccatum non fecit nec inventus est dolus in ore ejus qui cum malediceretur non maledicebat cum pateretur non comminabatur tradebat autem judicanti se injuste hec sunt humiliora ne

Item vir corporis sui non potestatem sed uxor

Item vir debitor simili ne

¶ Of Bathe ¶

Of that tonne / that ¶ shal approche
Be Bay of it / er thou to my approche
ffor ¶ shal telle ensamples / mo than ten
Who so / pt Wol nat be Bay / by other men
By hym / shul other men connetted be
The same Wordes / Writeth Protholomee
Rede it in his Almageste / and take it there
Danne / ¶ Wolde praye / if youre Wyl it Were
Herke this proheme / as ye bigan
Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
And lerne ye yonge men / of youre praktike
Blasly quod / seth it may yow like
But yet ¶ praye / to al this compaignye
If that ¶ speke / after my fantasye
As taketh it nat agrief / that ¶ seye
ffor myn entente / is but for to pleye
Now sire / now Wol ¶ telle forth my tale
As ete / moote ¶ drynken Wyn or ale
¶ shal seye sooth / of the housbondes pt ¶ Hadde
As the of hem Were goode / and Wyd Were badde
The thre men / Were goode / and riche / and olde
Ounethe / myghte they / the statut holde
In Which / that they Were / bounden yn to me
Ye Woot Wel / What ¶ meene of this pree
As help me god / ¶ laughe Whan ¶ thynke
How pitously / anyght / ¶ made hem ofthynke
And by my fey / ¶ tolde of it no stoor
They Has me yeven hir gold / and hir tresoor
Me nedes nat / do lenger diligence
To Wynne hir love / or doon hem reverence
They loved me so Wel / by god above
That ¶ ne tolde / no deyntee of hir love
A Wyf Wolde / Wol lette hir love go
To gete hir love / they as she hath noon
But sith ¶ hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
And sith they Hadde me yeven al hir lond
What sholde ¶ taken heede hem for to plese
But if it Were / for my profit and myn ese
¶ sette hem so a Werk / by my fey
That many a nyght they songen Wel laWey
The bacon / Was nat fet / for hem ¶ trowe
That som men Han / in Essey at Dunmowe
¶ goodnes hem / so Wel after my lawe
That ech of hem / Was ful blisful and fawe
To bringe me gaye thynges / fro the fayre
They Were ful glad / Whan ¶ spak to hem fayre
ffor god it Woot / ¶ chidde hem spitously
Now herkneth how ¶ saye me gretly

¶ Bishops holde this goode lyf-
lyes hir my fyfte housbondes
Which Were goode olde men

¶ Xenophantes ryght thus atheneus
cum dipno hodie recitat eorbicos-
trathas

Wyf wo

Ye wise wyues that can vnderstonde
Thus shul ye speke and bere hem on honde
ffor half so boldely can they no man
Swere and lye as can a woman
I sey nat this by wyues yt been wyse
But if it be whan they hem mysavyse
A wys wyf if that she can hir good
Shal bere hym on hond the cow is wood
And take witnesse of hir owene mayde
Of hir assent but herkneth how I sayde
Sir olde kaynard is this thyn array
Why is my neighebores wyf so gay
She is honoured ou alwhere she goth
I sitte at hoom I have no thrifty cloth
What dostow at my neighebores hous
Is she so fair artow so amorous
What rowne ye with our maydē benedicite
Sir olde lechour let thy japes be
And if I have a gossib or a frend
With outen gilt thou chidest as a fend
If that I walke or pleye vn to his hous
Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous
And prechest on thy bench with yuel prefe
Thou seist to me it is a grete meschief
To wedde a poure woman for costage
And if she be riche and of heigh parage
Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie
To suffren hir pryde and hir malencolie
And if she be fair thou verray knave
Thou seyst that euery holour wol hir have
She may no while in chastitee abyde
That is assailled vpon ech a syde
Thou seyst that som folk desiren vs for richesse
Some for our shap some for our fairnesse
And som for she kan synge and daunce
And som for gentillesse and som for daliaunce
Som for hir handes and hir armes smale
Thus goth al to the deuel by thy tale
Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal
It may so longe assailled been overal
And if that she be foul thou seist that she
Coueiteth euery man that she may se
ffor as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe
Til pt she fynde som man hir to chepe
Ne noon so grey goos goth ther in the lake
As seistow wol been with oute make
And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde
A thyng pt no man wole his thankes helde

¶ Of Bathe ...

Thus seistow lord / than thow woost to bedde
And pt no wys man / nedeth for to wedde
Se no man / that entendeth vn to heuene
With wilde thondey dynt / and fiyr leuene
Mhoote thy welked nekke be to broke
¶ Thow seyst / that dropping houses / & eek smoke
And chidyng wynes / maken men to flee
Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee
What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide
¶ Thow seyst / pt the wynes / wol ouve vices hide
Til we be fast / and thanne we wol shewe shrewe
Wel may that be / a grete of a shrewe
¶ Thou seyst / pt oxen / asses / hors / and hounden
They been assayd / at diuerse stounden
Vessels / spoones / ey that men hem bye
Spoones and stooles / and al swich housbondrye
And so been / pottes clothes / and array
But folk of wynes / maken noon assay
Til they be dronke / olde dotard shrewe
Thanne seistow / we wol ouve vices shewe
¶ Thou seyst / also / that it displeseth me
But if that I / wolde preyse my beautee
And but I pouve alwey / vpon my face
And clepe me fayre dame in euery place
And but I make a feeste / on the day
That I was born / and make me fressh & gay
And but I do / to my norice honour
And to my chamberere / with inne my bour
And to my fadres folk / and sire allyes
Thus seistow / olde barel ful of lyes
¶ And yet / of ouve apprentice / Ales
For his crisp heer / shynyng as gold so fyn
And for he dooth me / bothe wrong and wraste
yet hastow caught / a fals suspecioun
I wol hym nogt / thogh I were dede to morwe
But tel me / why hydestow with sorwe
The keyes of my cheste / awey fro me
It is my good / as wel as thyn or thee
That thenkestow / to make an ydiot of ouve dame
Now by that lord / that called is seint Jame
Thou shalt nat bothe / thogh I were wood
Be maister / of my body / and of my good
That on I shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
What nedeth thee / of me / to enquere or spyen
I trowe / thou woldest loke me in thy chiste
Thou woldest make / my keye / go where thee liste
Taak ouve disport / I wol leue no talys
I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf dame Alys

¶ Et procurator calamus [illegible]

Use lone no man / that taketh kepe or charge
Whey that he goon / he shal ben at oure large
Of alle men / blessed moot he be
The wise astrologien / daun Protholome
That seith this proverbe / in his Almageste
Of alle men / his Eyghen is the hyeste
That rekketh nevere / who hath the world in honde
Bi this proverbe / thou shalt understonde
Have thou ynogh / what thar thee recche or care
How myrily / that othere folkes fare
Ffor certeyn / olde dotard by youre leve
Ye shul have queynte / right ynogh at eve
He is to greet a nygard / that wolde werne
A man / to lighte his candle at his lanterne
He shal have / nevere the lasse light parde
Have thou ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee
Thou seyst also / that if he make him gay
With clothyng / and with precious array
That it is pryde of youre chastitee
And yet with sorwe / thou most enforce thee
And seye thise wordes / in the Apostles name
In habit maad with chastitee and shame
Ye Wommen / shul apparaille yow / quod she
And nought in tresses heer / and gay perree
As perles / ne with gold / ne clothes riche
After thy text / ne after thy debriche
I wol nat chyde / as mochel as a gnat
Thou seydest this / that I was lyk a cat
For whi so wolde / venge a cattes skyn
That wolde the cat / wol wexen in his in
And if the cattes skyn / be slyk and gay
She wol nat wexelle in house / half a day
But forth she goth / er any day be dawed
To shewe hir skyn / and goon a caterwawed
This is to seye / if I be gay sir wexbe
I wol renne out / my borel for to shewe
Lat see olde fool / what eyleth thee to chyden
Thogh thou pleye Argus / with hise hundred eyen
To be my warderere / as he kan best
In feith / he shal nat kepe me but lest
Yet koude I make his berd / so moot I thee
Thou seydest eek / that they been thynges three
The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
And pat no wight / may endure the ferthe
O leeve sire shrewe / Jhesu / shorte thy lyf
Yet preestes / and seyst and hatestow wyf
Yreckened is / for oon of thise meschances
Been they noon otheres resemblances

¶ Of Bathe ..

That ye may liken youre parables to
But if a selly Wyf be oon of tho
¶ Thou likenest Wommenes love to Hells
To Barel yns lond they Watry may nat Dwells
¶ Thou likenest it also to Wilde fyr
The more it brenneth the more it lyketh desyr
To consumen every thyng pt brent wole be
Thou seyst ryght as Wormes shendeth a tree
Right so a Wyf destroyeth hire housbond
This knowe they that been to Wymmes bonde
Forsothe ryght thus as ye han understonde
Sayd I ful wel myne olde housbondes on londe
That thus they seyden un hir dronkenesse
And al Pas fals but that I took Witnesse
On Janekyn and on my Nece also
O lord the pyne I dide hem and the Wo
Ful giltelees by goddes owene pyne
For as an hors I couthe byte and Whyne
I couthe pleyne thogh I were un the gilt
Or elles often tyme had I been spilt
Who so couthe first to myle first gynne
I pleynes first so Was oure Wyse ystyned
They were ful glad to excuse hem blyue
Of thyng of Which they nevre agilte hir lyue
¶ Of Wenches wolde I bere hym on honde
Han that for syk vnmethes myghte he stonde
yet tikled it his herte for that he
Wende I hadde of hym so greet chierte
I Woot pt al my Palegyne out by nyghte
Was for testyne Wenches pt he dighte
Vnder that colour hadde I many a myrthe
For al Wich thyng Was yeven vs in oure byrthe
Deerne Wepyng Spynnyng god hath yeve
To Wommen kyndely Whil that they may lyve
And thus of o thyng I avaunte me
Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech degree
By sleighte or force or by som maner thyng
As by continuel murmur or grucchyng
Namely abedde hadden they meschance
There wolde I chide and so hem no plesance
I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde
If that I felte his Arm over my syde
Til he had maad his raunsoun vn to me
Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his nycetee
And therfore every man this tale I telle
Wynne Who so may for al is for to selle
With empty hand men may none hawkes lure
For Wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure

¶ Amor ulius ñsequo & usenti the
& ñcendio copat Cuius ulius &c
¶ Insequy & amor mulieris & testa
que non Stat aqua & ignis
non dicent satis &c ..

¶ Sicut ñ ligno vinus ita ꝑdet vi
rum sua vxor ..

¶ Nemo melius scire potest quid sit
vxor vel mulier nisi ille qui pas
sus est ..

Cyf ~

Aus make me a feyned appetit
And yet nō bacon hadde I neuē delit
That made me that euē I dolde hem chide
ffor thogh the pope hadde geten hem biside
I dolde nat spare hem at hir owen bord
ffor by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word
As help me Jenay god omnipotent
Though I nyght moste sholde make my testament
I ne owe hem nat a word pt it my3 quit
I bieghte it so aboute by my wit
That they moste yeue it vp as for the beste
Or elles hadde we neuē been nī reste
ffor thogh he looked as a good leon
yet sholde he faille of his conclusion
Thanne dolde I seye good lief taak keep
how meekely looketh wilkyn oure sheep
Com neer my spouse lat me ba thy cheke
ye sholde been al patient and meke
And han a skeete spiced conscience
Syth ye so prise of gobes patience
Suffyreth alkey3 vyn ye so wel kan preche
And but ye do certein we shal yow teche
That it is fay3 to hane a Cyf nī pees
Don of vs two moste bokken domteles
And syth a man is moore resonable
Than woman is ye moste been suffrable
What eyleth yow to grutche thus and grone
Is it for ye wolde hane my queynte allone
Wy taak it al lo hane it euery deel
Peter I shrewe yow but ye loue it wel
ffor if I dolde sell my bele chose
I kouthe walke as fressh as is a rose
But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth
ye be to blame by god I sey yow sooth
Wiche maner wordes hadde we on honde
Now wol I speken of my fourthe housbonde

Of the condicion of the fourthe housbonde of this goode Cyf and how she serued hym ~

My fourthe housbonde was a reuelour
This is to seyn he hadde a paramour
And I was yong and ful of ragerye
Stibourne and strong and lusty as a pye
Wel kouthe I daunce to an harpe smale
And synge ywis as any nyghtyngale
Whan I had dronke a draughte of swete wyn
Metellius the foule thef the deth yn
That with a staf bireft his wyf hir lyf
ffor she drank wyn thogh I hadde been his wyf
He sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke
And after wyn on venus moste I thynke

Catonis. li°. 6°. c°. 3°. Iuxtellius
Cyclin sinam eo ip crimen bibisset
fuste percussam interemit ~

Of Bathe ...

For al so sikey / as cold engendreth hayl
A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
In womman vinolent / is no defence
This knowen lechours by experience
But lord crist / whan that it remembreth me
Upon my yowthe / and on my folitee
It tikleth me / aboute myn herte roote
Unto this day / it dooth myn herte boote
That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
But age allas / that al wole envenyme
Hath me bireft / my beautee / and my pith
Let go farewel / the devel go therwith
The flour is goon / there is namoore to telle
The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle
But yet / to be right myrie / wol I fonde
Now wol I tellen / of my fourthe housbonde
I seye / I hadde in herte greet despit
That he / of any oother had delit
But he was quit / by god / and by seint Joce
I made him / of the same wode a croce
Nat of my body / in no foul manere
But certein / I made folk swich cheere
That in his owene grece / I made him fry
For angre / and for verray jalousye
By god / in erthe I was his purgatorie
For which I hope / his soule be in glorie
For god it woot / he sat ful oft and song /
Whan pt his shoo / ful bitterly him wrong /
There was no wight save god and he pt wiste
In many wise / how sore I him twiste
He deyde / whan I cam fro Jerusalem
And lith ygrave / under the roode beem
Al is his tombe / nought so curious
As was the sepulcre / of him Darius
Which that Appelles / wroghte subtilly
It nys but waste / to burye him preciously
Let him fare wel / god yeve his soule reste
He is now / in his grave / and in his cheste
Now of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle
God lete his soule / neer come in helle
And yet was he to me / the moost shrewe
That feele I / on my ribbes al by rewe
And ever shal / unto myn endyng day
But in oure bed / he was ful fressh and gay
And therwith al / so wel koude he me glose
Whan that / he wolde han my bele chose
That thogh / he hadde me bet on every bon
He koude wynne / again my love anon

Appelles fecit unam bilem eqnis in
tumulo Darij vide in Alegor. li. 6°.

Of the fifthe housbonde of this
wyf / and how she bar him in hand
hym

Wyf

I trowe I loues hym best for that he
Was of his loue daungerous to me
We wommen haue if that I shal nat lye
In this mateie a queynte fantasye
Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly haue
Ther after wol we crie al day and craue
Forbede vs thyng and that desiren we
Preesse on vs faste and thanne wol we fle
With daunger oute we al oure chaffare
Greet prees at market maketh deere ware
And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys
This knoweth euery womman that is wys
My fifthe housbonde god his soule blesse
Which pt I took for loue and no richesse
He som tyme was a clerk of Oxenford
And hadde left scole and wente at hom to bord
With my gossib dwellynge in oure toun
God haue hir soule hir name was Alisoun
She knew myn herte and eek my privetee
Bet than oure parisshe preest as moot I thee
To hir biwreyed I my conseil al
For hadde myn housbonde pissed on a wal
Or don a thyng pt sholde han cost his lyf
To hir and to another worthy wyf
And to my nece which pt I loued weel
I holde han toold his conseil euery deel
And so I dide ful often god it woot
That made his face ful often reed and hoot
For verray shame and blamed hym self for he
Had toold to me so greet a privetee
And so bifel that ones in a lente
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente
For euere yet I loued to be gay
And for to walke in march aprill and may
Fro hous to hous to heere sondry talys
That fortheyn day and my gossyb dame Alys
And I my self in to the feeldes wente
Myn housbonde was at london al the lente
I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye
And for to se and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk what wiste I where my grace
Was shapen for to be or in what place
Therfore I made my visitacions
To vigilies and to processions
To pryngnes eek and to thise pilgrimages
To pleyes of myracles and to mariages
And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes
Thise clothes and thise wymples and thise mytes

¶ Of Bathe ...

Upon my ꝑil / fiere hem nevȝ a deel
And ȝestoȝ thy: for they kepe vses deel
But wol ¶ telle forth what happes me
¶ seye / that in the feeldes walkes he
Til the Bely / he hadde Bisi ꝑsiance
This clerk and ¶ / that of my ꝑuiance
¶ spak to hym / and seyde hym / how ꝑ he /
If ¶ keye keyserke / sholde kesse me
ffor certeinly / I dey for no dobbance
yet was ¶ nedie / with outen ꝑuiance
Of manage / nof otheye thynges eek
¶ holde a mouses heyte / nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole / for to fleyte to
And if ꝑ ffaille thamme is al ydo
¶ bar-hym on honde he hadde enchantes me
My dame taughte me that soutilte
And eek ¶ seyde ¶ mette of hym al nyght
He wolde han slayn me as I lay ful-pight
And al my bed was ful of verray blood
But yet ¶ hope that he shal do me good
ffor blood bitokeneth gold as me was taught
And al was fals ¶ dremed of it right naught
But ¶ folkes ay my dames looze
As wel of this as otheye thynges mooze
But nou sir lat me se what ¶ shal seyn
A ha by god ¶ have my tale ageyn
Whan ꝑ my fourthe housbonde was on beere
¶ wep algate and made ofey cheere
As wynes mooten for it is vsage
And with my cointhief coured my visage
But for ꝑ ¶ was purueyed of a make
¶ wepte but smal and that ¶ undertake
To chirche was myn housbonde forth amoȝe
With neighebozes that for hym maden ofȝe
And Jankyn oure clerk was oon of the
As helpe me god whan ꝑ ¶ sawgh hym go
After the beere me thoughte he hadde a paire
Of legges / and of feet so clene and faire
That al myn herte / I yaf hym to hir hoold
He was ¶ trowe / a twenty wynter-oold
And ¶ was fourty / if ¶ shal seye sooth
And yet ¶ hadde alwey a coltes tooth
Gat tothed ¶ was / and that bicam me weel
¶ hadde the ꝓzente of Cenit venus eel
As helpe me god / ¶ was a lusty oon
And fair and riche / and yong / and wel bigon
And ther-by / as myne housbondes tolde me
¶ hadde the beste Quoniam myght be

Salyanson Amphorison. 1c.

Cum in ascendente fuerit ipsius tpem nota ni facie prohet q̃ in nativitatibz mulier cui fuit ascendens aliqua de domibz vcris ignite existente in eis vel ejo erit mulier nupturi Hec erit si fuerit caput cum in ascendente the hues in sio fiducie Amphorus. 24o.

Galen. li. 6o. fo. 1c.

Thus endeth the Book of the Duchesse

ffor certes I am al devoyded
Of fantasye and myn hevy thoght
Which that I had so long yholden
Which sykenesse nigh hath me dreynt
Ne hadde myn hertes lust ben queynt
Right thorugh a merveyllous adventure
That Juppiter of his grete cure
And Mercurie his clerk also
Han made, for hem to undo
Me and many another mo
For which the sorwful goddes two
Han had a grete altercacioun
Touchyng my disposicioun
And how that Morpheus and Ixion
Han had my wo al in prysion
Ne how Alcione hath bewept
Hir dreynt husbonde, whyl he slept
Ne how Ceys was lost also
Ne how Tantalus wepeth his wo
Ne how Dedalus hath peyne
Desirous folk ay to restreyne
Ne how Tityus, for his folye
Fond love first the compaignye
Ne how Ticius men to shende
Ful ofte tymes wolde sende
Ne how Athalante hunted the bore
Ne how Meleagre, lost ful sore
Ne how Adonis was yslayn
Ne how Narcisus for disdayn
Ne how Ekko for hir clappyng
Ne how Jasion had his lovyng
Ne how Dane was love dere
Ne how Piramus and Tesbe
Hir lyves lost right for love
Ne how Acteon aboght dere his love
Ne how Calixte was bygyled
Ne how Criseyde Troylus exyled
And made him wepe many a nyght
Ne how Ector was slayn in fight
Ne how for love Leander
Was drowned on a wynter day
Ne how Isaude and Tristram dye
Ne how Isaude the Whyte lye
Ne how Dido with sorwe hir bane
Ne how Ecquo is love al vayne
Ne how Hero Leandres drenched
Ne how Ero hir barge wrenched
Ne how Phillis hanged hir for wo
Ne how Canace loveth hir bro
Ne how Hipomanes ran
Ne how Atalanta hath a man
Ne how Pigmalion purchaced
Ne how the Bisshop hath chaced
Fro hym the boy with candel lyght
Ne how Vulcanus was to spyte
To Venus, whan he hir hath take
With Mars, and bad hir go hir make
Ne how Parvs hath loved Helayne
Ne how Achilles was yslayn
Ne how Paris was slayn also
Ne how Pirrus with mochel wo
Was slayn, and Troylus alas
Ne how Hercules of love was
Ne how Adriane was betrayed
Ne how Tisbe hath hir lover prayed
Ne how Phillis hath hanged hir
Ne how Demophon was to hir
Ne how Lucresse was oppressed
Ne how Hasdrubales wife hath confessed
Ne how Sapho for Phao
Ne how Ypsiphile was slo
Ne how Medea was betrayed
Ne how Jason hath his love payed
Ne how Briseyda false was
Ne how Languyle hath lost the pas
Ne how Penolope abood
Ne how Alcistes dyed good
Ne how Ulixes and Circes
Ne how Eleyne and Paladion
Ne how Achilles and Policene
Ne how Deiphebus was slayn
Ne how Ulixes was fayn
To counterfete him dede also
Ne how Achilles for his wo
Wolde have slayn him self, ywys
Ne how Ulixes and Ayvs
Debated were for armes two
Ne how Ulixes hath slayn so
Many a man, ne how he wroght
Ne how he Troye hors abroght
Ne how Troye was destroyed
Ne how Ulixes hath employed
Ne how Ulixes was betrayed
Ne how Ulixes hath assayed
Ne how Ulixes false was
Ne how Ulixes hath lost the pas
Ne how Ulixes abood
Ne how Ulix

¶ of Cathe ...

¶ Thus ouffleth his Cyf/ te go ocken halkes
Ys Worthy to been hanged on the galkes
But al for nought/ ¶ sette nought an halke
Of his promises/ nor his olde talke
And Holde nat/ of hym tometres be
¶ hate hym/ that myn yres telleth me
And so doo mo/ gos Woot of Ve/ than ¶
This made hym/ With me. Woos al outrely
¶ nolde nought forbere hym in no cas
¶ Tho Wol I/ synge yow sooth/ by Seint Thomas
Why p^t ¶ wente out of his book a lef
ffor Which he smoot me so/ p^t ¶ was ref
He hadde a book/ p^t gladly myght and day
ffor his desport/ he Wolde rede alday
He cleped it/ Valerie/ and Theofraste
At Which book/ he lough alwey ful faste
¶ And eek they/ Was oon tyme a clerk at Rome
A Cardinal/ that highte Seint Jerome
That made a book/ agayn Jouinian
In Which book/ eek they/ Was Tertulan
Crisippus Trotula/ and Helowys
That Was abbesse/ nat fer fro Parys
And eek the parables of Salomon
Ovides Art/ and bookes many on
And alle thise/ Were bounden in o volume
And every nyght and day/ was his custume
When he hadde leyser/ and vacacion
ffram other/ Worldly/ occupacion
To reden on this book/ of Wikked Wyves
He Wiste of hem/ mo legendes and lyves
Than been of goode Wyves in the bible
ffor trusteth Wel/ it is an impossible
That any clerk Wol speke good of Wyves
But if it be/ of hooly Wymmes lyves
Ne noon other/ Woman/ nevere me
Who peynted the leon/ tel me Who?
By god if Wymmen/ hadde Writen stories
As clerkes han/ Within hire oratories
They Wolde han Writen/ of men moore Wikkednesse
Than al the mark/ of Adam may redresse
The childeren of mercurie and Venus
Been in hir Werkyng/ ful contrarius
Mercurie loveth Wysdam and science
And Venus loveth ryot and dispence
And for hir diverse disposicion
Ech falleth/ in otheres exaltacion
And thus god Woot/ mercurie is desolat
In pisces/ Wher Venus is exaltat/

¶ Tne des mulieu ueip^m Veiam
zdeundi' cce'. xl^o.

¶ Quis pingit leonem ...

¶ Dic tacet vbi alia exaltat ...

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And Venus falleth they whenne is reysed
Therfore no Comman of no clerk is preysed
The clerk whan he is old and may nought do
Of Venus werkes wryth his olde slo
Whanne out he dom and lyst in his dotage
That Comen kan nat kepe hir mariage
But nought to purpos why I tolde there
That I was beten for a book pere
Upon a nyght Jankyn pt was oure syre
Redde on his book as he sat by the fyre
Of Eua first that for hir wikkednesse
Was al mankynde broght to wrechednesse
ffor which crist hym self was slayn
That boghte vs with his herte blood agayn
Lo here expres of Woman may ye fynde
That Woman was the los of al mankynde
Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heres
Slepynge his lemman kitte it out his eres
Thurgh which tresor lost he both his eyen
Tho redde he me if that I shal nat lyen
Of Hercules and of his Dianyre
That causes hym to sette hym self afyre
Nat thyng forgat he the ordre and do
That Socrates hadde with his wyues two
How Xantippa caste pisse vpon his heed
This selv man sat stille as he were deed
He wyped his heed namoore dorste he seyn
But er pt thonder stynte comth a reyn
Of Pasyphia that was the queene of Crete
ffor shrewednesse hym thoughte the tale swete
ffy quek namoore it is a grisly thyng
Of hir horrible lust and hir likyng
Of Clitermystra for hir lecherye
That falsly made hir housbonde for to dye
He redde it with ful good deuocion
He tolde me eek for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lyf
Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his wyf
Eriphilem that for an Ouche of gold
Hath prively vn to the grekes told
Ther that hir housbonde hidde hym in a place
ffor which he hadde at Thebes ful yl grace
Of Lymia tolde he me and of lucye
They bothe made hir housbondes for to dye
That oon for loue that other was for hate
Lymia hir housbonde upon an euen late
Empoysoned hath for pt she was his fo
Lucia likerous knew hir housbonde so

That for he sholde alwey vpon hym thynke
She yaf hym swich a mawgre lone drynke
That he was wood ey-wis bey the mone
And thus algates housbondes han done
Thanne tolde he me hoole pr̃oon latumyus
Compleynes vn to his felawe anon
That in his gardyn growes swich a tree
On which he seyde hoolde that hise wyues three
Hanges hem self for herte despitus
O leeue brother quod this anon
yif me a plante of thilke blisful tree
And in myn gardyn plantes it shal be
Of latter date of yeres hath he red
That conne han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed
And lete hir lechour sighte hir al the nyght
Whan that the corps lay in the floor vp right
And conne han wyne wayles in hir brayn
Whil pt they slepte and thus they han hem slayn
Conne han hem yeue poyson in hir drynke
He spak nowe hayn than herte may bithynke
And they with al the kinde of mo gyleles
Than in this world they mowen gras or seedes
Ber is quod he thyn habitacion
Certes with a leon or a foul dragon
Than with a woman vsinge for to chyde
Ber is quod he hye in the toop abyde
Than ert an angry wyf than wol in the hous
They reen so wikked and contrarious
They haten that hir housbondes loueth ay
He seyde a woman cast hir shame away
Whan she cast of hir smok and forther mo
A fayr woman but she be chaast also
Is lyk a golde ryng in a sowes nose
Who wolde weene or who wolde suppose
The wo that in myn herte was and pyne
And whan I thought he wolde nede fro me
To reden on this cursed book al nyght
Al sodeynly three leues hath I plyght
Out of his book right as he radde and eke
I with my fest him on the cheke
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun
And he up stirte as doth a wood leoun
And with his fest he smoot me on the heed
That in the floor I lay as I were deed
And whan he sawgh how stille pt I lay
He was agast and wolde han fled his way
Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde
O harlot quod he thryn me falsly beyde

Gaudius auienus in naphy Ouid
mulier formosa & fatua .i. iuuenca

And for my land thus hastow mordred me
Er I be ded yet wol I kisse thee
And neer he cam and kneled faire adoun
And seyde dere suster Alisoun
As helpe me god as shal thee neode smyte
That I same soon it is thy self to byte
Foryeve it me and that I thee biseke
And yet eft soones I hitte hym on the cheke
And seyde theef thus muchel am I wreke
Now wol I dye I may no longer speke
But atte laste with muchel care and wo
We fille acorses by de oelmen two
He yaf me al the brydel in myn hond
To han the governance of hous and lond
And of his touge and his hond also
And made hym bicome his lige man tho
And whan that I hadde geten yn to me
By maistrie al the contree
And that he seyde myn owene trewe lyf
Do as thee lust to ende of al thy lyf
Kep thyn honour and kep eek myn estaat
After that day we hadden nevere debaat
God help me so I was to hym as kynde
As any lyf wyf was yn to synde
And also trewe and so was he to me
I prey to god that sit mi magestee
So blesse his soule for his mercy deere
Now wol I seye my tale if ye wol heere

Thus holde the wordes bitweene the Somonour and the fryer

Whan the frere herde how he hadde heeld al thys
Now dame quod he so have I joye or blis
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whan the Somonour herde the frere gale
Lo quod the Somonour goddes armes two
A frere wol entremette hym everemo
Lo goode men a flye and eek a frere
Wol falle in every dyssh and mateere
What spekestow of preambulacioun
What amble or trotte or pees or go sit doun
Thou letteest oure disport in this manere
Ye wolto so sire Somonour quod the frere
Now by my feith I shal er that I go
Telle of a Somonour swich a tale or two
That alle the folk shal laughen in this place
Now elles frere I bishrewe thy face

Quod this Somonour / and I byshrewe me
But if I telle tales / two or three
Of freres / er I come to Sidyngborne
That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne
For wel I woot / thy pacience is gon
Oure Hoost cride pees / and that anon
And seyde / lat the Sonnman telle his tale
ye faire as folk / that dronken ben of ale
Do Game / telle forth youre tale / and that is best
Al redy sire quod she / right as yow lest
If I have licence / of this worthy frere
Yis game quod he / tel forth / and I wol here

Here endeth the Prologe of Bathe hir Prologe / And
bigynneth hir tale

Thise olde Gentil Britons / in hir dayes
Of diverse sondry / folk diden gret honour
Al was this land / fulfild of fayrye
The elf queene / with hir joly compaignye
Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede
This was the olde opinion as I rede
I speke / of many hundred yeres ago
But now can no man / se none elves mo
For now the grete charitee / and prayeres
Of limytours / and other holy freres
That serchen / every lond / and every streem
As thikke / as motes / in the sonne beem
Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes bowres
Cites / burghes / castels / high towres
Thropes / bernes / shipnes / dayeryes
This maketh that there ben no fayryes
For there as wont to walken was an elf
There walketh now the limytour himself
In undermeles / and in morwenynges
And seyth his matyns / and his holy thynges
As he goth / in his limytacioun
Wymmen / may go safely up and down
In every bussh / or under every tree
There is / noon other incubus but he
And he / ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
Hadde in his / a lusty bachelor
That on a day / came ridynge fro river
And happed that / alone as he was born
He sawgh a mayde walkynge him biforn

Of which maydē anon maugree hyr hees
Hyr verray force hirafte hyr maydenhes
ffor which oppssion was which clamour
And which pursute vn to the kyng Anthour
That dampned was this knyght for to be deed
Hyr cours of lacke / and sholde han lost his heed
Paventure / which was the statut tho
But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
So longe preyden the kyng of grace
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place
And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
To chese whether they she wolde hym sture or spille
The queene thanketh the kyng ⁊ al his myght
And after this thus spak she to the knyght
Whan pt she saugh hir tyme vpon a day
Thou standest yet quod she in swich array
That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee
I graunte thee lyf if thou canst tellen me
What thyng is it that women moost desiren
Be wys and keep thy nekke boon fro vilonye
And if thou canst nat tellen it anon
yet shal I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelf month and a day to seche and leere
An answere suffisaunt in this mateere
And suretee wol I han er pt thou pace
Thy body for to yelden in this place
W Tho was this knyght and sorwefully he siketh
But he may nat do al as hym liketh
And at the laste he chees hym for to wende
And come agayn right at the yeres ende
With swich answere as god wolde hym purveye
And taketh his leve and wendeth forth his weye
He seketh every hous and every place
Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace
To lerne what thyng wommen loven moost
But he ne kouthe arryven in no coost
Where as he myghte fynde in this mateere
Two creatures accordyng in feere
Some seyde wommen loven best richesse
Some seyde honour some seyde jolynesse
Some riche array some seyden lust abedde
And oftetyme to be wydwe and wedde
Some seyde pt oure hestes been moost esed
Whan that we been yflatered and ypleased
He goth ful nyh the sothe ⁊ wol nat lye
A man shal wynne us best with flaterye
And with attendaunce and with bisynesse
Been we ylymed bothe moore and lesse

Titus lineus

Of Bathe ...

And some seyn / that we louen best
ffor to be free / and so right as vs lest
And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice
But seye p^t we be wise / and no thyng nyce
ffor werkely / they is non of vs alle
If any wight / wol calle vs on the galle
That we nel like / for he seith vs soth
Assay / and he shal fynde it p^t so doth
ffor be we / wedde vicious with alle
We wol been holden wise and clene of synne

And some seyn / that gret desit han we
ffor to been holden stable / and eek secree
And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle
And nat bivreye thyng / that men vs telle
But that tale / is nat worth a pake stele
Pardee we women / konne no thyng hele
Witnesse on myda / wol ye herke the tale

Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale
Seyde / myda hadde vnder his longe heres
Growynge vp on his heed / two asses eres
The which vice he hydde / as he best myghte
fful subtilly / from ech mannes sighte
That save his wyf / ther wiste of it namo
He loued hir moost / and trusted hir also
He preyde hir / that to no creature
She sholde telle / of his disfigure
She wroot hym nay / for al this world to wynne
She nolde do / that vilenye or synne
To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name
She nolde nat telle it / for hir owene shame
But natheles / hir thoughte p^t she dyde
That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
Hir thoughte / it swal so soore / aboute hir herte
That nedely / som word hir moste asterte
And eith she soore / telle it to no man
Doun to a mareys / faste by she ran
Til she cam there / hir herte was a fyre
And as a bitore / bombleth in the myre
She leyde hir mouth / vn to the water doun
Biwreye me nat / thou water wat thy soun
Quod she / to thee / telle it and noone
Myn housbonde / hath longe asses eres two
Now is myn herte al hool / now is it oute
I myghte no longer / kepe it out of doute
Now may ye se / myn owene shame
But natheles / me thoughte p^t she dyde
That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
Myn thoughte / it dide me ese / now wil I nat lye
That nedely / som word me moste asterte
And with the first / that I may with you mete
I shal nat spare / to telle it in youre eres
Swich was the wordes / of this Midas
Namore sayde he / but hom he gan pace
Now turne we / from him / and speke we of Ire
Which in his herte / gan so brenne and fire
That he wolde / on som wight / han vengeance
His herte was / to han / of som pitance
He thoughte / wel / how he hadde / mysdone
In sleeng / his wyf / al be it / was allone
For which / the lawe / hadde / maad him wo
And yet / he nyste / nat / wher he / was so
He nyste / nat / if she / was slayn or nay
But stalkynge / as a / man / out of the way
He fleeth / in / to / the / feldes / him / alone
He / ne / knew / ne / cite / ne / dwellynge / none
But / as / the / wilde / beest / that / hath / ymaad
Som / man / dismayed / or / doon / som / vilenye
That / drecched / is / for / ech / wight / is / his / foo
So / fleeth / Ire / ful / dredful / of / his / woo
And / to / his / owene / hous / anon / he / nam
And / whan / he / wist / his / wyf / was / nat / slayn
Anon / he / sente / after / his / frendes / alle
And / whan / they / were / come / anon / in / his / halle
He / gan / to / make / his / mone / and / his / wo
And / sayde / he / was / right / now / ther / he / stood
Doun / to / a / mareys / faste / by / the / wode
How / that / he / wende / han / founden / there / his / wyf
And / how / he / hadde / a / knyf / in / his / lyf
And / how / he / wende / han / slayn / his / wyf
And / how / his / wyf / was / gon / out / of / his / lyf
And / how / he / nyste / nat / if / she / be / slayn
Or / yet / alyve / for / ought / he / can / sayn
And / how / he / dredde / for / drede / of / the / lawe
And / how / he / fleeth / and / knowe / it / wolde / nawe
And / how / he / hadde / hir / sought / bothe / fer / and / wyde
And / how / he / nyste / where / to / abyde
And / how / he / wolde / han / slayn / him / self / also
And / how / his / frendes / han / him / wo / bigo
And / how / he / nolde / nat / slen / him / self / for / nought
But / han / the / lawe / therof / as / him / ought
And / how / he / was / enclosed / al / aboute
With / men / that / wolde / him / take / out / of / doute
And / how / he / wolde / fle / the / contree / out / right
And / how / his / frendes / han / him / told / anon / right
That / it / was / wrong / and / how / he / hadde / him / avised
And / how / the / lawe / was / on / him / wel / agised
And / how / that / pitee / slow / the / lawe / anon
And / how / that / he / was / demed / for / to / gon
Out / of / the / land / and / how / he / was / forbanned
And / how / he / nyste / wher / to / become / he / wanned
And / how / his / frendes / him / conveyed / thanne
And / how / he / gat / him / wyves / and / children / manne
And / how / he / couthe / him / self / wel / bere
In / honest / wyse / as / longeth / to / manere
And / how / he / coude / his / good / wel / dispende
And / how / he / was / in / grete / reverence / mende
And / how / he / was / ful / wys / and / ful / privee
And / how / he / was / ful / pleyn / and / ful / free
And / how / he / was / ful / fortunat / in / armes
And / how / he / was / biloved / wel / of / his / armes
And / how / he / was / ful / wys / and / ful / discret
And / how / he / was / ful / sad / and / ful / secret
And / how / he / was / ful / sad / and / ful / secret
And / how / he / was / ful / sad / and / ful / secret

The Knyf ...

This knyght / of which / my tale is specially
Than that he saugh / he myghte nat come therby
This is to seye / That Comuen loue moost
With inne his brest / ful sore hem was the goost /
But hoom he gooth / he myghte nat soiorne
The day was come / pt hom hayd moste he torne
And in his key / it happed hym to ryde
In al this cite / vnder a forest syde
Ther as he saugh / vp on a daunce go
Of ladyes / foure and twenty / and yet mo
Toward the whiche daunce / he drow ful yerne
In hope / that som Disport / sholde he lerne
But certeinly / er he cam fully there
Vanyssshed was this daunce / he nyste where
No creature sawgh he / that bar lyf
Save on the grene / he sawgh sittynge a wyf
A fouler wight / ther may no man deuyse
Agayn the knyght / this olde wyf gan ryse
And seyde o knyght / heer forth ne lith no key
Telle me / what that ye seken by youre fey
Peraunture / it may the bettre be
Thise olde folk han muchel thyng quod she
Thy leeue moodey / quod this knyght ageyn
I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
What thyng it is / that Comen moost desire
Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quite youre hire
Plight me thy trouthe / heere in myn hand quod she
The nexte thyng / that I requere thee
Thou shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght
And I wol telle it yow / er it be myght
Have heer my trouthe / quod the knyght I graunte
Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auaunte
Thy lyf is saaf / for I wol stonde therby
Vpon my lyf / the queene wol seye as I
Lat se / Which is the proudeste of hem alle
That weryth on / a coroun of a calle
That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
Lat us go forth / Withouten lenger speche
Tho rouned she / a pistel in his eye
And bad hym to be glad / and have no feye
Whan they be comen to the court / this knyght
Seyde he had holde his day / as he hadde myght
And ladyes was his answere / as he sayde
Ful many a noble wyf / and many a mayde
And many a widwe / for pt they been wise
The queene hir-self sittynge as iustise
Assembled been / his answere for to heere
And afterwards / this knyght was bode appeere

The wyfes tale of Bathe

Whan that the kynge this answere herde
Awey ful sadly gan he steppe
And seyde, dame, I ne can nat telle
Where thyng the grete auctour dwelle
Thys knyght, of which that I have spoke
Ne stood nat stille as doth a boke
But to his question anon answerde
With manly voys that al the court it herde
Thy lige lady, generally, quod he
Wommen desiren have sovereyntee
As wel over hir housbond as hir love
And for to been in maistrie him above
This is youre mooste desir, though ye me kille
Doth as yow list, I am at youre wille
In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
Ne widwe that contrarie that he sayde
But seyden he was worthy han his lyf
And with that word up sterte the olde wyf
Which that the knyght sat first in the grene
Mercy, quod she, my sovereyn lady queene
Er that your court departe, do me right
I taughte this answere unto the knyght
For which he plighte me his trouthe there
The firste thyng I wolde him requere
He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght
Before the court than prey I thee, sire knyght
Quod she, that thou me take unto thy wyf
For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf
If I sey fals, sey nay, upon thy fey
This knyght answerde, allas and weylawey
I woot right wel that swich was my biheste
For goddes love, as chees a newe requeste
Take al my good, and late my body go
Nay thanne quod she, I shrewe us bothe two
For thogh that I be foul, old and poore
I nolde for al the metal ne for oore
That under erthe is grave, or lith above
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love
My love quod he, nay my damnacion
Allas that any of my nacion
Sholde evere so foule disparage he
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he
Constreyned was, he needes moste hir wedde
And taketh his olde wyf, and goth to bedde
Now wolden some men seye parauntre
That for my negligence, I do no cure
To tellen yow the joye, and al the array
That at the feeste was, that day
To which thyng shortly answere I shal
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al

Wyf ...

Ther was out heynesse and mucke sorwe
ffor ynely he sadles his on a morwe
and al day after hidde hym as an owle
So doo was hym his wyf lookes so foule
Gret was the doo the knyght hadde in his thogt
Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybrogt
he walweth and he tumeth to and fro
his oldo wyf lay ouerlynge euermo
And seyde o dere housbonde benedicite
ffareth ony knyght thus with his wyf as ye?
Is this the lawe of kyng arthures hous?
Is euery knyght of his so daungerous?
I am youre owene love and youre wyf
I am she which pt saued hath youre lyf
And certes yet ne dide I yow neuere vnright
Why fare ye thus with me this firste nyght?
ye faren lyk a man hadde lost his wit
What is my gilt? for goddes love tel it
And it shal been amended if I may
Amended quod this knyght? allas nay nay
It wol nat been amended neuere mo
Thou art so loothly and so old also
And therto comen of so lough a kynde
That litel wonder is though I walke and synde
So wolde god myn herte wolde breste
Is this quod she the cause of youre unreste?
Ye certeinly quod he no wonder is
Now sire quod she I coude amende al this
If that me liste er it were dayes two
So wel ye myghte bere yow vn to me
But for ye speken of swich gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen
Loke who that is moost vertuous alway
Pryuee and apert and moost entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he kan
Taak him for the grettest gentil man
Crist wole we clayme of him oure gentillesse
Nat of oure eldres for hir old richesse

Nec generositate ...

For thogh they yeue vs al hir heritage
For which we clayme to been of heigh parage
yet may they nat biqueethe for no thyng
To noon of vs hir vertuous lyuyng
That made hem gentil men yealled be
And bad vs folwen hem in swich degree
Wel kan the wise poete of florence
That highte Dant speken in this sentence

¶ of Wathe ...

Lo in wich maner ȳyn is Dantes tale
fful oft he vseth hȳ his braunches smale
Prowesse of man for god of his goodnesse
Wole that of hȳm we clayme our gentillesse
ffor of our eldres may we no thyng clayme
But temporel thyng pt man may hȳte & mayme
¶ Eek euery wight wot this as wel as I
If gentillesse were planted naturelly
Vn to a certeyn lynage down the lyne
Prively nor apert thanne wolde they nevere fyne
To don of gentillesse the fayre office
They mȳghte do no vilenye ne vice
Taak fyr and ber it in the derkeste hous
Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous
And let men shette the doores and go thanne
yet wole the fyr as fayre lye and brenne
As twenty thousand men mȳghte it biholde
his office natureel ay wol it holde
Vp pil of myn lyf til that it dye
Heere may ye se wel how pt gentrye
Is nat annexed to possessioun
Sith folk ne don hir operacioun
Alwey as doth the fyr lo in his kynde
ffor god it wot men may wel often fynde
A lordes sone do shame and vilenye
And he pt wolde han pris of his gentrye
ffor he was born of a gentil hous
And haddе his eldres noble and vertuous
And nel himself do noon gentil dedis
Ne folwen his gentil auncestre pt deed is
He nys nat gentil be he duc or erl
ffor vileyns sinful dedes make a cherl
ffor gentillesse nys but renomee
Of thyne auncestres for hir heigh bountee
Which is a straunge thyng to thy persone
Thy gentillesse cometh fro god allone
Thanne comth our verray gentillesse of grace
It was no thyng biquethe vs with our place
Thenketh how noble as seith Valerius
Was thilke Tullius hostilius
That out of povrete roos to heigh noblesse
Reed Senek and redeth eek Boece
Ther shul ye seen expres pt no dede is
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis
And therfore leve I vnto this conclude
Al were it that myne auncestres were rude
yet may the hyȝe god and so hope I
Graunte me grace to lyven vertuously

¶ Exemplum ...

¶ Cyf

¶ De pauptate

Thaume am I gentil, than that I bigynne
To lyuen vtuously, and leyue oynne
Hers they as ye, of poucrte me repreeue
The hye god, on whom pt we bileeue
In Cristul poucrte, chees to lyue his lyf
And certes, euery man, mayden or wyf
May vnderstonde, that this heuene kyng
We wolde nat chesen vicious lyuyng
Alas pouite, is an honeste thyng certeyn
This wole oenec and othere clerkes seyn
Who so pt halt hym payd of his poucrte
I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a shrte
He pt coueiteth, is a poucre wight
For he wolde han, that is nat in his myght
But he pt noght hath, ne coueiteth hane
Is riche, al though ye holde hym but a knane
¶ Benay pouite, it oynyeth prely
Iuuenal, seith of pouite myrily
The poure man, whan he goth by the weye
Before the thenes, he may oynge and pleye
Pouite is hateful good, and as I gesse
A ful greet bryngere, out of bisynesse
A greet amendere eek of sapience
To hym that taketh it in pacience
Poucrte is this, al though it semc alenge
Possession, that no wight wol thalenge
Pouite ful ofte, whan a man is lowe
Waketh his god, and eek hym self to knowe
Pouite, a spectacle is, as thynketh me
Thurgh which he may, his verray frendes see
And therfore sire, syn pt I noght yow greve
Of my poucrte, nathelcre ye me repreve
Or sey sire, of elde ye repreue me
And certes sire, though noon auctorite
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Seyn, pt men sholde an old wight doon stond
And clepe hym fader, for youre gentillesse
And auctours, shal I fynden as I gesse
Of thre ye seye, pt I am foul and old
Than drede you noght, to been a cokewold
For filthe and elde, also mote I thee
Been ȝiete I dey ns, vp on this feere
But nathelees, syn I knowe youre delit
I shal fulfille, youre worldly appetit
Chese now quod she, oon of thise thynges two
To han me foul and old, til that I deye
And be to yow, a trewe humble wyf
And nevere yow displese, in al my lyf

¶ Seneca in epistol
¶ Honesta res est leta pauptas

¶ Dampnet quin egeat eo qđ non het
ex hoc quod no het nec appetit here illc.
Iuuenes est se quo nitelli is ytyo
cap. 30. Dicas quia diues omnia

¶ Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator et nocte as lumen
respondabit ayuus ybrum
¶ Philosophus
¶ Dauptas est possibile bonum
Amicitie mate cuiay remoto
capie repatriy possessio cuie
calumpnia

¶ Unde ecclesiastes ille Thebanus
Proiecto in mari non pauperiem
ait sed curam, Abite inquit pessime
inuide cupiditates, ego vos
frugalitate me que egaly a vobis

¶ De senectute

¶ De tpitudine

Olde folk, men yow calle
Certes though I be old, it dooth me palle
The name of elde, for fayn wolde I flee
For in myn herte, I feele no elde be
Myn herte is fresh, as is the rose in May
For elde hath wrong, me to alay
Alday I wene, I be as yong in dede
As any man, of al the toun I rede
Me lakketh wit, allas allas the while
That clerkes, lakken us in her compile
Us wymmen, whan that we been yonge and fayre
And han our wittes, and al our lymes repayre
We shewe our folye, and our vanitee
Til we be dryuen, out of every degree
Now auctours, speken in hir bookes olde
Of which I nyl, as now no tale holde
Lat clerkes, write of hem that been vnwyse
I can nat spelle, I wot right no wyse
But wite ye, what seith Valerie also
Right heere, agayn Theofraste lo
Ne recche nevere, though I nat wyue take
Ne whether my bones, lye by my make
Or in a tombe, or in the wilde see
Ne recche nevere, who sorwe for me wepe
Ne of this chapitre, make I no force
Ne of no swich, thyng I me recorce
But pleynly, for my wille is for to telle
Myn owne tale, before I parte fro telle
And god forbede, but men shulde telle his wo
Right as his fortune, wolde that it were so
Even as a clerke, hath as wel to write
Now of a wyf, as of a man parfit
Of good and badde, and somtyme of the worse
Than of the beste, blessed be Venus goddesse
Now herkeneth, how I speke after this
Now sith I first, began to wexe a wyf
Myn husbondes two, there were and namo
Me liste nat, to speke hem harm now no
For no thyng, but that they were to me
Nat wel of hem, god of his grace wot I be
But I wot wel, what profyt men me tolde
And trewely, as wel as any wyf olde
Was me ytold, certeyn I nyl nat lye
Ye wote your self, wel how that I can plye
To han a thyng, this wolde I have fet
I sey nat therfore, that it wol be so
But that me liste, now sey wel or wo
For sorwe, as now, me list for to pleye
Now wol I tellen, forth of my tale seye
Tho that I wolde, han non in my route
To kepe my body, and eek to wayte about
Me nedeth nat, hem for to pray of loue
For I wol profren, hem fayrer than they proue
To any man, that wol my body have
I am nat wery, god wot so my grave
But I wol have, somwhat my lyf to glade
And leten him, lepe and sterte and wade
Which folk han yeven, me my mede first
For certein sommes, and sithen haue me nurst
Ful lyte while, and maden me ful fayne
Here is the mede, that I of hem wynne
That is to sey, that I hem serue and kepe
Whan that I wolde, han al my lust and wepe
But it be right, indeed thus wol I nat
But now herkeneth, if that ye wol chat
Now sire, now wol I first, begynne
To lyuen vtuously, and leye oynne
Hers they as ye, of poucrte me repreeue
The hye god, on whom pt we bileeue
In Cristul poucrte, chees to lyue his lyf
And certes, euery man, mayden or wyf
May vnderstonde, that this heuene kyng
We wolde nat chesen vicious lyuyng
Alas pouite, is an honeste thyng certeyn
This wole oenec and othere clerkes seyn
Who so pt halt hym payd of his poucrte
I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a shrte
He pt coueiteth, is a poucre wight
For he wolde han, that is nat in his myght
But he pt noght hath, ne coueiteth hane
Is riche, al though ye holde hym but a knane
¶ Benay pouite, it oynyeth prely
Iuuenal, seith of pouite myrily
The poure man, whan he goth by the weye
Before the thenes, he may oynge and pleye
Pouite is hateful good, and as I gesse
A ful greet bryngere, out of bisynesse
A greet amendere eek of sapience
To hym that taketh it in pacience
Poucrte is this, al though it semc alenge
Possession, that no wight wol thalenge
Pouite ful ofte, whan a man is lowe
Waketh his god, and eek hym self to knowe
Pouite, a spectacle is, as thynketh me
Thurgh which he may, his verray frendes see
And therfore sire, syn I noght yow greve
Of my poucrte, nathelcre ye me repreve
Or sey sire, of elde ye repreue me
And certes sire, though noon auctorite
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Seyn, pt men sholde an old wight doon stond
And clepe hym fader, for youre gentillesse
And auctours, shal I fynden as I gesse
Of thre ye seye, pt I am foul and old
Than drede you noght, to been a cokewold
For filthe and elde, also mote I thee
Been ȝiete I dey ns, vp on this feere
But nathelees, syn I knowe youre delit
I shal fulfille, youre worldly appetit
Chese now quod she, oon of thise thynges two
To han me foul and old, til that I deye
And be to yow, a trewe humble wyf
And nevere yow displese, in al my lyf

¶ Of Bathe ...

Or elles / ye wol han me yong and fay
And take youre auenture / of the ioye
That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
Or in som oother place / may wel be
Now chese youre selven / wheither / pt you lyketh
¶ This knyght auyseth hym and sore siketh
But atte laste he seyde in this manere
Vnto his lady and his love / and herte so dere
¶ put me in youre wise gouernance
Cheseth youre self / which may be moost plesance
And moost honour / to you and me also
¶ so no force / the wheither of the two
For as you liketh / it suffiseth me
¶ Thanne haue ¶ gete of you / maistre quod she
Syn ¶ may chese / and goone as me lest
Ye certes wyf quod he / ¶ holde it best
Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe
For by my trouthe / ¶ wol be to you bothe
This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
¶ pray to god / pt ¶ moote stenen stood
But ¶ to you / be also good and trewe
As euere was wyf / syn pt the world was newe
And but ¶ be to morn / as fair to seene
As any lady / Emperice or queene
That is bitwixe the est / and eke the west
Doth wel my lyf / and deth / ryght as you lest
Cast up the curtyn / looke how that it is
And whan the knyght / sangh verily al this
That she so fair was / and so yong therto
For ioye / he hente hyr / in his armes two
His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse
A thousand time a-wreke / he gan hyr kisse
And she obeyed hym in euery thyng
That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng
And thus they lyue / vn to hir lyues ende
In parfit ioye / and thus I you recomende
Housbondes meeke / yonge / and freissh a-bedde
And grace / to buxom be hem pt vs wedde
And eek / I pray Jhu shorte hir lyues
That nat wol be gouerned by hir wyues
And olde and angry nygardes of dispence
God sende hem soone / verray pestilence ...

Here endeth the Wyues tale of Bathe &

The prologe of the fieles tale

Ys worthy lyuyetoun / this noble fiele
The made aslepe / a maner louyng chiele
Upon the somono / but for honestee
No vileynis woxd / as yet to hym spake he
But atte laste / he seyde vn to the clyf
Dame quod he / god yelde yow ryght good lyf
Ye han seey touches / also moot I thee
In stole materye / greet difficultee
Ye han seyd muche thyng right wel I seye
But dame heere as ye ryde by the weye
Me nedeth nat · to speken but of game
And lete auctoritees on goddes name
To fythyng and to stole of clergye
And if it lyke to this compaignye
I schol yow of a somono telle a game
Parde ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a somono may no good be sayd
I praye yt noon of you be yuele apayd
A somono is a renney cry and doun
Cryth mandementz for fornicacioun
And is ybet at euery townes ende
Oure hooste tho spak / a lyte ye schulde be hende
And curteys / as a man of youre estaat
In compaignye / we wel shal no debaat
Telleth youre tale / and late the somono be
Nay quod the somono / late hym seye to me
What so hym lyst / what I can quiten euery del
I schal hym telle / wheth a greet honour
It is to be a flatereynge lyuyetour
And of many another manere crym
Which nedeth nat reherce for this tyme
And his office / I schal hym telle ywis

Oure hooste answerde / pees no more of this
And after this / he seyde vn to the fiele
Tel forth youre tale / leene maistre reele

Heere bigynneth the fieles tale

Whilom there was dwellynge in my contree
An erchedekens / a man of heigh degree
That boldely / dide execucioun
In punysshynge / of fornicacioun

Office ~

Of Witchecraft and eek of Sorcerye
Of Diffamacioun and Auoutrye
Of chirche Reues and of testamentz
Of contractes and eek of lakke of sacramentz
Of vsure and of Symonye also
But ther lecchours bide he gretteste Ioe
They sholde synge if pt they Were shent
And smale tytheres Were foule yshent
If any pson wolde vp on hem pleyne
They mighte assoile hym no pecunial peyne
Ffor smale tithes and smal offrynge
He made the peple pitously to synge
Ffor er the bisshop caughte hym Wt his hook
They Were in the Erchedeknes book
And thanne hadde he thurgh his Iurisdiccioun
Power to don on hem correccioun
He hadde a Somonour redy to his hond
A slyer boye nas noon in Engelond
Ffor subtilly he hadde his espiaille
That taughte hym Wher hym mighte auaille
He koude spare of lecchours oon or two
To techen hym to foure and twenty mo
Ffor though this Somonour Wood Were as an hare
To telle his harlotrye I dar nat spare
Ffor he been out of his correccioun
They han of me no Iurisdiccioun
Me nedeth shullen telle of hir shrewes
Ne Peter so been Wommen of the stywes
Quod the Somonour ypput out of my cure
Forces Wyth my stanue and Wt my pennoun
Thus seyde oure hoost and sat hym telle his tale
Anon telleth forth thogh pt the Somonour gale
Me spareth nat myn owene maistres heed
This false theef this Somonour quod the feend
Hadde a Wenche redy to his hond
As any hauk to lighte on Engelond
That telde hym al the secree pt they knewe
Ffor hir aqueyntance Was nat comun of newe
They Were wel Wont hise appetytes plese
He took hym self a greet gobet of bren
His maistres knewe nat alwey What he Wan
Wyth outen mandement a lewed man
He koude somne on peyne of Cristes curse
And they Were glade for to fille his purse
And make hym grete festes atte nale
And right as Iudas hadde purses smale
And Was a theef right swich a theef Was he
His maistres hadde but half his duetee

He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude
A theef / and eek a Sompnour / and a baude
He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
That whether / pt sw- lost or sw- huske
Or gatte / or nauf / or elles pt it weye
That lay by hem / they tolde it in his eye
Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent
And he wolde fetche a feyned mandement
And somne hem to chapitle bothe two
And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
Do stroken hyr / out of oure lettres blake
Thee thar nat mooze as in this cas trauaille
I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
Certeyn he knew of bribyes mo
Than possible is / to telle in yeres two
For in this world nys dogge for the bowe
That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
Ne than this Sompnour / knew a lyk lecherour
Or an auowtier / or a pandour
And for that was the fruyt of al his rente
Therfore on it he sette al his entente
And so bifel / that ones on a day
This Sompnour / ete redy on his pray
For to somne an old wydwe a ribibe
Feynynge a cause / for he wolde hyre
Happed / that he mighte bifore hym ryde
A gay yeman / under a forest syde
A bocle he bar / and arwes bright and kene
He hadde vp on / a tortuly of grene
An hat vp on his hees / with frenges blake
Syr quod this Sompnour / hayl and wel atake
Wel come quod he / and euery good felaw
Wher ryde ye / vnder this grene wode shawe
Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day
This Sompnour hym answerde / and seyde nay
Here fast by quod he / is myn entente
To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
That longeth / to my lordes duetee
Ha tolle thanne a bailly / iwis quod he
He werte nat for wel nay fillyke and shame
Telle pt he was a somnour / for the name
Depardieux quod this yeman / deere broother
Wost thou wel a bailly / and I am another
I am vnknowen / as in this contree
Of thyn aqueyntance I wolde preye thee
And eek of brotherhede / if pt yow leste
I haue gold / and siluer in my cheste

If that thee happe to comen in oure chyre
Al schal be thyn right as thou wolt desire
Quantuntyn quod this Somonour by my feith
Sikyth in oothere hand his mouthe leith
For to be clepid brethren til they seye
In pasiance they wisen forth his weye
This Somonour that was as ful of jangles
As ful of venym been this false jangles
And ek enquerynge up on every thyng
Brother quod he wiste ye now yourr dwellyng
Anothey day if pt I sholde yow seche
This yeman hym answerde in softe speche
Brother quod he fer in the north countree
Where as I hope sum tyme I schal thee see
Er I the departe I schal thee so wel wisse
That of myn hous ne schaltow neure myssse
Now brother quod this Somonour I pray thee
Teche me whil pt I here by the weye
Syn pt ye been a baillif as am I
Som subtiltee and tel me feithfully
In myn office how I may most winne
And spareth nat for conscience ne synne
But as my brother tel me how do ye
Now by my trouthe brother sweete seyde he
As I schal tellen thee a feithful tale
My wages been ful streite and ful smale
My lord is hard to me and daungerous
And myn office is ful laborous
And therfore by extorcions I lyve
For sothe I take al that men wol me yeve
Algate by sleyghte or by violence
Fro yeer to yeer I winne al my dispence
I can no bettre telle feithfully
Now certes quod this Somonour so fare I
I spare nat to taken god it woot
But if it be to heyy or to hoot
What I may gete in conseil prively
No maner conscience of that have I
Nere myn extorcion I myghte nat lyven
Ne of swiche japes wol I nat be shryven
Stomak ne conscience ne knowe I noon
I shrewe thise shrifte fadres everichoon
Wel be thee nieth by god and by seint Jame
But leeve brother tel me thanne thy name
Quod this Somonour in this meene while
This yeman gan a litel for to smyle
Brother quod he wiltow pt I thee telle
I am a feend my dwellyng is in helle

Officer.

And kepe q̄ ȳse about my ꝓfessyng
To wite, yf ony men wolde me ȳeuen any thyng
my purchas, is theffect of al my entente
Loke look thou ȳyuest for the same entente
To ȳemme goods thou ȝettest nede hath
Right so fare q̄ for ȳse q̄ wolde nght nath
Yn to the worldes cure for a preye
Quod this Somonour bridle wel thyn eye:
q̄ Quod ȳe kepe a ȳeman tweyfely
ȳe han a manres chap as wel as q̄
Han ȳe figure thamme determinat
In helle they ȳe been in ȳoure estat:
Nay steuenly quod he they have no noon
But whan us liketh we kan take oon
Or elles make yowe oone we been shape
Sometyme lyk a man or lyk an ape
Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go
It is no wonder thyng though it be so
A lowesy jogelour kan deceyue moo
And ȝwe yet kan I more craft than he
Why quod this Somonour ryde ȳe thamme or goon
In sondry shap and nat alwey in oon:
For we quod he wol us wel more lerne
As most able is our preyes for to take
What maketh yowe so han al this labour
Ful many a cause lewe cyp Somonour
Seyde this feend but alle thyng hath tyme
The day is short and it is passed prymme
And yet ne kan I no thyng in this day
I wol entende to wynnen if I may
And nat entende my wittes to declare
For nothing nyn but my wit is al to care
To vnderstonde al though I tolde hem thee
But for thou axest why labouren we
For some tyme we been goddes instrumentz
And medicines to doon his commandementz
Whan that hym list vpon his creatures
In diuers art and in diuerse figures
Withouten hym we have no myght certayn
If that hym list to stonden ther agayn
And some tyme at our prayere han we leue
Only the body and nat the soule greue
Witnesse on Iob whom that we diden wo
And some tyme han we myght of bothe two
This is to seyn of soule and body eke
And some tyme we be suffred for to take
Vpon a man and doon his soule vnreste
And nat his soule and al is for the beste

There ¶

Whan he withstandeth oure temptacion
It is cause of his saluacion
Al be it that it was nat oure entente
he sholde be sauf but pt we holde hym heute
And sometyme be we seruant vn to man
As to the bisshop seint Dunstan
And to the apostles seruant eek was I.
¶ Yet tel me quod the Somono ferthfully
Make ye yow newe bodies thus alway
Of elementz: the feend ans[wered] nay
Sometyme we feyne and sometyme we aryse
With dede bodyes vn to ful soundry wyse
And speke as renably and fetys and wel
As to the pithonissa dide Samuel
And yet wol somme seye it was nat he
¶ Do no fors of youre dyuynytee
But o thyng warne I thee I wol nat lape
Thou wolt algates wite how we been shape
Thou shalt hem shortly fynden ayther kynde
Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere
For thou shalt by thyn owene experience
Conne vn a chayer rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgile while he was on lyue
Or Dant also now lat vs ryde blyue
For I wole holde compaignye with thee
Til it be so that thou forsake me
¶ Nay quod this Somonour that shal nat betyde
I am a yeman knowen is ful wyde
My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas
For though thou were the deuel Sathanas
My trouthe wol I holde to my brother
As I am sworn and ech of vs til oother
For to be trewe brother vn to his cas
And bothe we goon abouten ones pas
Take thou thy part that pt men wol thee yeue
And I shal myn and thus may we bothe lyue
And if pt any of vs hath more than oother
Late hym be trewe and parte it wt his brother
¶ I graunte quod the deuel by my fey
And with that word they ryden forth hir wey
And right at the entryng of the toune ende
To which this Somonour shoop hym for to wende
They sawgh a cart that charged was with hey
Which pt a carter shoof forth in his wey
Deep was the wey for which the carte stood
This carter swoor and eyde as he were wood
Hayt lyk hayt stot that spare ye for the stones
The feend quod he yow feche body and bones

Affiere ...

As fessetyly as doo we ye foles
So unche we as ȝe haue with ȝoure tholes
The deuel haue al bothe hors and cart and hey
Quod Somonour sey we shal be haue a pley
And neer the feend he drough as nogt ne keys
Ful pryuely and yorkes in his eye
Herkne my brother herkne by thy feith
Hestow nat how pt the carter seith
Hent it anon for he hath ȝeue it thee
Bothe hey and cart and eek his cartes tree
Ray quod the deuel god woot nedeth weel
It is nat his entente trust thou me weel
Axe hym thy self if thou nat trowest me
Tho assay stynt a while and thou shalt see
This carter taketh his hors on the croupe
And they bigonne starten and to stoupe
Heyt now quod he they ihm cunne ȝoure fessse
And al his hand weyeth bothe moore and lesse
That was wel wroght myn owene lyard boy
I preye to god saue thee and seint loy
Now is my cart out of the slowh pitee
Lo brother quod the feend what tolde I thee
Here may ye se myn owene deere brother
The carl spak oon but he thoghte another
Let vs go forth aboute our viage
Here shynne I no thyng vpon cariage
Whan that they comen somwhat out of toune
This Somonour to his brother gan to roune
Brother quod he here woneth an old rebekke
That hadde almoost as lief to lese hir nekke
As for to ȝeue a penny of hir good
I wole hir wynne xij. pens thogh pt I stode
Al day I shal for hir dispitously
And yet god woot of hir knowe I no vice
But for thou canst nat as in this contree
Shynne thy lore I preye thee ensample of me
This Somonour klappeth at the widwes gate
Com out quod he thou olde virytrate
I trowe thou hast som fiend or pryuee
Who clappeth seyde this feire benedicitee
God save yow sire quod she what is youre sweete wille
I bane quod he of somonce a bille
Vp on peyne of cursyng looke pt thou be
Tomorwe biforе the archedeknes knee
To answere to the court of certeyn thynges
Now lord quod she crist thu kyng of kynges
So wisly helpe me as I me may
I haue ben syk and wel nyh fyf may

I may nat go so fer quod she ne wyde
But I be deed, so pryketh it myn hyde
Myn I nat axe a libel, hy Domonoun
And anskere there, by my patentoun
To ech thyng, as men shole oppesen me?
Yis quod this Domonour pay anon lat se
Thelf pens to me, and I shal the acquite
I shal no profit han they by, but lite
My maistey hath the profit, and nat I
Doun of, and lat me wyden hastily
Yif me .xij. pens I may no lenger tarye
Thelf pens quod she, now sadly sertes myne
So wisly help me god, out of care and synne
This hyde Gost, though pt I sholde synne
Me thane I nat .xij. pens ert I inne wyn shoolde
Ye knowen wel, that I am poure and oolde
Fithe youre almesse, ou me poure wrecche
Nay thamme quod he, the foule feend me fecche
Yif I thexcuse, though thou shul be quit
Allas quod she, god woot I thane no guilt
Pay me quod he, or by the sweete sertes Anne
As I, wol bere ake thy nelke panne
For dette, which that thou owest me of old
Whan pt thou madest thyn housbonde cokewold
I payde at hoom, for thy correccion
Thou lixt quod she, by myn salvacion
Me thas I nede er now, sythe me thyf
Domones cu to youre court, un al myn lyf
Me nede I nat, but of myn body trewe
Un to the deuel blak, and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body, and myn panne also
And whan the deuel, seyde hym cursen so
Upon hys knees he seyde un this maneres
Now herkne, myn owene modey sustres
Is this youre wyl, un ernest pt ye seye?
The deuel quod she, so fetche hym er he deye
And panne and al, but he wol hym repente
Nay olde Got, that nis nat myn entente
Quod this Domonour, for to repente me
For any thyng, that I have has of thee
I wolde I hadde thy smok and every cloth
Now brother quod the deuel, be nat wroth
Thy body, and this panne, been myne by right
Thou shalt with me to helle, yet to nyght
Where, thou shalt knowen, of oure pryvete
More, than a maister of Dyonysye
And pt that wors, this foule feend hym hente
Body and soule, he with the deuel wente

Lyeth as that Somonour hath his heritage
And god & mahomet & his lynage
Mahoun his sone and eyther of hem alle and some
And sette this Somonour good man bifore me
Lordynges & koude han told yow & this fiere
Hadde I had leyser for this Somonour heere
After the text of Crist & poul & John
And of oure othere doctours many oon
Which peynes that yonge & myghte aswyve
Al be it so no tonge may it discryve
Thogh I myghte a thousand wynter telle
The peynes of thilke cursed hous of helle
But for to kepe us & fro that cursed place
Taketh and preyeth thou for his grace
So kepe us & fro the temptour Sathanas
Herketh this fiend beth redy as in this cas
The lyon sit in his awayt alway
To sle the innocent if that he may
Dispose ay youre hertes to withstonde
The feend & yow to make thral & bonde
He may nat tempte yow over youre myght
For crist wol be youre champion and knyght
And prayeth & that this Somonour hem repente
Of hir mysdedes er & the feend hem hente

Here endeth the ffreres tale

The prologe of the Somonours tale

This Somonour in his stirrupes hye stood
Upon this fiere his herte was so good
That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire
Lordynges quod he but o thyng I desire
I yow biseke that of youre curteisye
Syn ye han herd this false & fiere lye
As shal me help & may my tale telle
This fiere bosteth that he knoweth helle
And god it woot that it is litel wonder
ffreres and feendes been but lyte a sonder
For pete ye han ofte tyme herd telle
How that a fiere vanysshed was to helle
In quyt ones by a wisdom
And as an angel leedde hym up and down
To shewen hym the peynes & ther were
In al the place & nought he nat a fiere

Of oothey folk / he oughy ynoghe in the
Un to this Angel / spak the fieye tho
Now eye quod he / han fieyes swich a grace
That noon of hem / shal come to this place:
Yis quod this Angel / many a thousand
And un to Sathanas / he ladde hym doun
And nere hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
Hoodey than of a Comyk / is the sayl
Hoold eye thy tayl / thou Sathanas quod he
Shewe forth thyn eye / and sat the fieye se
Hethey is the nest of fieyes / in this place
And eyght half a furlong wey of space
Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue
Out of the develes eye / they gonne dryue
Twenty thousand fieyes / in a route
And thurgh out helle / hem swarmen aboute
And comen again / as faste as they may gon
And in his eye / they crepten everychon
He clapte his tayl again / and lay ful stille
This fieye Sathan he hadde loke al his fille
Upon the torments / of this derey place
His spirit god restored of his grace
In to his body again / and he awook
But natheles / for feye yet he quook
So was the develes eye / ay in his mynde
That is his heritage / of verray kynde
God save yow alle / save this cursed fieye
Wyf prologe / wol I curse / in this manere

Here bigynneth the Somnour his tale

Thesyuges they is in yeresyne as I gesse
A ryal contree / called Trotemesse
In which they / haue a custume aboute
To fysshe and eek to begge / it is no doute
And so bifel / that on a day / this fieye
Hadde preches at a chirche in his manere
And specially / aboven every thyng
Exortes he the people in his prechyng
To fredome / and to yeue for goddes sake
Wherey with men mighte hooly houses make
Ther as Divine seruyce is honoured
And that they / it is wasted and deuoured
Ne they it needeth nat / for to be yeue
As to possessioners / that mowen lyue

The Somnour

Thankes be god / quod he / and habundaunce
Trentals seyde he / deliuereth fro penaunce
his freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
ye whan pt they been hastily ysonge
Nat for to holde a preest ioly and gay
he syngeth nat but o masse in a day
Delivereth out quod he / anon the soules
fful hayle it is / pt fleshhook or pt oules
To been yclawed / or to breme or bake
Now spede yow hastily for cristes sake
And whan this frere had seyd al his entente
With rum' cum pratte forth his wey he wente
Whan folk in chirche had yeue hym what hem leste
he wente his wey no lenger wolde he reste
With scrippe and tippes staf ytukked hye
In euery hous he gan to pouke and pryve
And begged meele and chese or elles corn
His felawe hadde a staf tippes with horn
A peyre of tables al of yuory
And a poynutel polysshed fetisly
And wroot the names alwey as he stood
Of alle folk that yaf hym any good
Astaunces that he wolde for hem pley
yif hym a busshel whete malt or rye
A gobbet fleshly / or a tryp of chese
Or elles what yow lyst / he may nat cheese
A gobbet halfpeny / or a masse penny
Or yif ye of youre bountee / if ye have eny
A bagon of youre blanket leeue brother
Quod curteys frere / lo heere I wrote youre name
Bacon or hoef or swich thyng as ye fynde
A stundy haylot wente ay hem bihynde
That was hir hostes man and bar a sak
And what men yaf hem leyde it on his bak
And whan pt he was out at dore anon
he planed awey the names everichon
That he biforn had writen in his tables
he frayed hem with nyfles and with fables
Thus wey they thus lyth thus Somnour up the steye
And ofte tyme he moste his cuppe weye
Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al
So thryve I quod this Somnour so I shal
So longe he wente hous by hous til he
Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be
Refresshed more than in an hundred places
Ofte sithe the goode man / whos the place is
Bisette hym on a touche hym he sithe
Deus hic quod he o Thomas freend good day

Seyde this frere curteisly and softe
Thomas quod he/ god yelde yow ful ofte
Haue I/ vpon this benche/ faren ful weel
Heere haue I eten/ many a myrie meel
And fro the bench/ he droof awey the cat
And leyde adoun/ his potente and his hat/
And eek his scrippe/ and sette hym softe adoun
His felawe/ was go walked vn to toun
Forth with his knaue/ vn to that hostelrye
Where as he shoop hym/ thilke nyght to lye
O deere maister/ quod this olde man
Now han ye faren/ with pt wyked ginan
I saugh yow nogh this fourtnyght or more
God woot quod he/ labouren I haue ful sore
And specially/ for thy saluacion
Haue I seyd/ many a precious orison
And for oure other frendes god hem blesse
I haue to day/ been at youre chirche at messe
And seyde a sermon/ after my symple wit
Nat al after/ the texte of holy writ
For it is hard to yow/ as I suppose
And therfore/ wol I teche yow al the glose
Glosynge/ is a glorious thyng certeyn
For lettre sleeth/ so as thise clerkes seyn
Whereas hem haue I taught heer to be charitable
And spende her good/ ther it is resonable
And ther I saugh oure dame/ a where she is
Somwhat in the yeerd/ I trowe pt she be
Where this man/ and she wol come anon
For maistres/ wol come in ye/ by seint Johan
Now leeue this stynt/ now faire ye hertely/
Now there herde I/ ful curteisly
And lowe enbowen to his auctour alwey
And fiste hym creepte/ and shoof as a sleighe
With his knowes/ Dame quod he right heer-
As he/ that is youre seruant euery deel
Thanked be god/ pt yow yaf soule and hyt
yet saugh I nat this day/ so fayr a wyf
In al the chirche/ god so saue me
Ye/ god amende defautes/ sire quod she
Algates/ welcome be ye/ by oure fey
I am right glad/ that I shal haue a sermon
Out of youre grete goodnesse/ by youre leue
I gesse pleye yow/ pt ye nat yow greue
I wole/ quod Thomas/ yif me leue a litel thynge
To quyte youre fantasye wel atwixe
Youre auctour/ and myn/ this nedeth nat parde
For lettre wrighte/ thus seith expres the glose
That clerkes/ whan they write/ sholde hir wit dispose
To wryte/ trewely/ and entente
To the honour of crist/ and his hooly gente

Somonis

Thus studie in textes olde and in newes
I walke and fisshe cristen mennes soules
To yelden thu crist his owne peute
To quyte his owne as set al myn entente
Now by youre leue o deere sire quod she
Chideth hym wel for seuene twelue
He is as angry as a wespe nye
Though pt he haue al that he kan desire
Though I hym shye a myght & make hym gayn
And on hym leye my leg outher myn arm
He groneth lyke owre doge lith in owre sty
Oother desport right noon of hym have I
I may nat plese hym in no manere cas
O Thomas je vous dy Thomas Thomas
This maketh the feend this moste ben amended
Ye is a thyng that hye god defendes
And they of wol I seke a lond or two
Now maistre quod the shyf cy pt I go
What wol je dyne I wol go they aboute
Now dame quod he now je vous dy sanz doute
Have I nat of a capon but the lyuere
And of youre softe breed nat but a shyuere
And after that a rosted pigges heed
But that I nolde no beest for me deye deed
Thanne hadde I with yow homely suffisance
I am a man of litel sustenance
My spirit hath his foostryng in the bible
The body is ay so redy and penyble
To wake that my stomak is destroyed
I pray yow dame je be nat annoyed
Though I so freendly yow my counseil shewe
By god I wolde nat telle it but a fewe
Now sire quod she but o word cy I se
My child is ded with nyne thise blake lokes
Soone after pt je deute out of this toun
This deth saugh I by reuelacioun
Seuth this freere at hoom in owre dortour
I dar wel seyn that cy pt hath an hour
After his deth I saugh hym born to blisse
In myn auision so god me wisse
So aute owre dortour and owre fermerer
That han ben trewe freres fifty yeer
They may now god be thanked of his loone
Maken hir iubilee and walke allone
And up I loos and al owre couent eke
Wel many a teere triklyng on my cheke
Right outen noyse or claterynge of belles
Rong was owre song and no thyng elles

Ge

Dame / that to thy / I seyde an ersou
Thankynge hym / of his / reuelacion
ffor eny and Dame / thynketh me right weel
Oure orisons / been wel moore effectueel
And moore ac seen / of thestes secree thynges
Than bisi folk / al though they seyen hynges
We shyue un poynte / and un abstinence
And bisy folk / un richesse and despence
Of mete and dryynke / and un hy soul delit
We han this worldes lust / al un despit /
Lazar and Dives / shyuesden diuersly
And diuse geydon / hadden they they by
Wyo so wol preye / he moot faste and be clene
And fatte his soule / and make his body lene
We saye as seith thapostle / clooth and foode
Suffisen vs / though they be nat ful goode
The clennesse and the fastynge of vs seyes
Maketh / pt crist accepteth oure preyeres
So moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyghte
ffastes / er pt the heighe god of myghte
Spak with hym / un the mount of synay
With empty woube / fastynge many a day
Receyues he the lawe / that was writen
With gooddes fynger / and elles wel ye witen
In mount oreb / er he hadde any speche
With hye god / that is oure shryues leche
He fastes longe / and was in contemplance
Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernance
And eek / that othere preestes euerichon
In to the temple / whan they sholde gon
To preye for the people / and do seruyse
They nolden drynken / un no manere wyse
Na dryynke / which pt myghte hem dronke make
But there / un abstinence preye and wake
Lest that they deyden / taak heede what I seye
But they be sobre / that for the people preye
Wan that / I seye namoore / for it suffiseth
Oure lord thu as hooly writ deuyseth
yaf vs ensample / of fastynge and preyeres
Therfore we wendynautz we holy freres
Been wedded to continence
To chastite / humblesse / and abstinence
To persecucion / for rightwisnesse
To herynge / wisericorde and clennesse
And therfore may ye / pt oure preyeres
I speke of vs / we wendynautz we freres
Been to the hye god / moore acceptable
Than yowres / pt youre feestes at the table

Tyelius est aliam sagittare ipm corpꝰ
Quam ē vestitū his contentū simꝰ

De oratoribꝰ ⁊ ieiuniis ꝺ
de oratorib⁹ ⁊ ieiu

¶ Who parasyte first I shal nat lye
Was man out chaced for his glotonye
And chaast was man / in parasyte eteyn
¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
I ne haue no text of it / as I suppose
But I shal fynde it / in a manere glose
That specially / oure swete lord thus
Spak this by fleyes / whan he seyde thus
Blessed be they / that poure in spirit been
And so forth / al the gospel / may ye seen
Whey it be likke / oure profession
Or hire / that reynnen in possession
Fful on hire youre / and hire glotonye
And for hire leccherye / I hem diffye
¶ Me thynketh / they been lyk Jovinyan
Fat as a whale / and walkynge as a swan
Al vinolent / as botel in the spence
Hire prieres / is of ful gret reuerence
Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Dauit
Lo / but they seye / cor meum conturbauit
Who folweth / cristes gospel / and his fore /
¶ But ke pt humble been / and chaast and poore
Werkens of goddes hord / nat auditoure
They fore / right as an hauk vp at a soure
Vp sprynigeth in to they / right so prayeres
Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres
Maken hire soule / to godde ese tho
Thomas Thomas / so moote I ryde or go
And by that lord / pt clepid is Seint yue
Rede thou oure brother / sholdestou nat thryue
In oure chapitre / praye we day and nyght
To crist / pt he thee sende heele and myght
Thy body for to warysen hastily
¶ God woot quod he / no thyng they of seke I
As help me crist / as in a fewe yeres
I haue spent / vp on suche manere freres
Ful many a pound / yet fare I neuer the bet
Certeyn my good / I haue almoost biset
Farwel my gold for it is al ago
¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas verraily se:
What needith yow / suche freres seche
What needith hym / pt hath a pfit leche
To seche out other leches in the toun /
Your inconstance / is your confusioun
Holde ye thanne me / or elles oure couent
To prayen for yow / ben insufficient /
Thomas that shal ye nat lacke a myte
Your malady / is for we haue to lyte

The Somono

A yif that Conent half a quayk otes
A yif that Conent xxiiij grotes
A yif that slepe a peny and lat hym go
Nay nay Thomas it nay no thyng be so
That is a festhyng Forth paytes in twelue
To ech thyng that is ones in it delue
Is moore stronge than Chan it is to stateyes
Thomas of me thou shalt natt been yflateyes
Thou Coldest han ouye labouy al for nought
The hye god that al this Forld hath Cought
Seith that the Feithful Forthy is his hyde
Thomas nought of youy tresor I desire
As for my self but that al ouye Conent
Do preye for yoW is ay so diligent
And for to buylden cristes owene chirche
Thomas if ye Col lernen for to Cirche
Of buyldynge Of of chirches may ye fynde
If it be good ma Thomas lyf of pride
Ye lye heede ful of Anger of ire
With Which the deuel set youy herte afyre
And chiden heede the dely innocent
Youre Cyf that is so meke and patient
And therfore Thomas thoWe me if thee leste
Ne fthyue nat with thy Cyf as for thy leste
And bey this Word a key nock by thy feith
Touchynge this thyng lo What the Cryst seith

Cum Cuiusq; Culpa fortior est super
biam ...

Cum Cuiusq; Culpa fortior est super
biam ...

With oure thyn hous ne be thou no leon
To thy subgitz ne noon oppression
Ne make thyne aqueyntances nat for to flee
And Thomas yet eft soones I chalenge thee
Ne Way-thou hyd pt in thy bosom slepeth
Ne Way-flo the serpent that so slily crepeth
Vnder the gras and stynggeth subtilly
Ne Way my sone and herkne paciently
That Crenty thousand men han lost hir lyues
For fthyuyng Of hir Cemans and hir wyues
Nost oth ye han so hooly meke a Cyf
What needeth youW Thomas to maken fthyf
They nys yeuys no serpent so cruel
That man tyet on his thombe half so fel
As Woman is Than she hath raught an ire
Vengeance is thanne al that they desire
Ire is a synne oon of the grete of seuene
Abhominable vn to the god of heuene
And to hym self it is destruccion
This euery lerres Vikey or prsón
Kan seye hoW ire engendreth homycide
Ire is ma sooth executour of pryde

Si Coli esse sicut leo in domo tua .
cidens domesticos tuos oppressos
subiectos tibi ...

90

Thouse of qte / seye so muche sorwe
Myn tale / sholde laste / til tomorwe
And therfore / preye I god / bothe day & nyght
An qpous man / god sende hym litel myght
It is gret haym / and eek gret pite
To sette an qpous man / in heigh degree
Whilom / they Cas an qpous potestat /
As seith Senek / that duryng his estaat
Upon a day / out ryden knyghtes two
And as ffortune / wolde that it sholde so
That oon of hem cam hoom / that oothey noght
Anon the knyght / biforе the juge is brought
That seyde thus / thou hast thy felawe slayn
ffor which / I deme thee to the deeth certayn
And to anothey knyght / comaunded he
To lede hym to the deeth / I charge thee
And happed / as they Cente by the weye
Toward the place / they he sholde deye
The knyght cam / which men kenden has be seed
Thanne thoughte they / it Cas the beste deed
To lede hem bothe / to the juge agayn
They seiden lord / the knyght ne hath nat slayn
his felawe / heere he standeth hool alyue
ye shul be deed / quod he / so moot I thryue
That is to seyn / bothe oon and two / and thre
And to the fyfte knyght right thus spak he
I warne thee / thou most algate be deed
And thou also / most nedes lese thy heed
ffor thou art cause / why thy felawe deyth
And to the thridde knyght right thus he seith
Thou hast nat doon / that I comanded thee
And thus / he dide doon sleen hem alle three
Qpous Claudius / Cas eek yronne
And ay delited hym / to doon a shrewe
And so bifel / a lord of his meynee
That loued vertuous moralitee
Seyde on a day / bitCene hem two right thus
A lord is lost / if he be vicius
And dronkenesse / is eek a foul record
Of any man / and namely in a lord
Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
Awaityng on a lord / and he noot Chere
ffor goddes loue / drynk moore attemprely
Wyn maketh man / to lesen wrecchedly
his mynde / and his lymes euerichon
The veneys walketh / quod he anon
And preeue it / by thyn owene experience
That wyn / ne doth to folk no wight offence

Dhey is no syn, bycnetz me my myght
Of hans ne foot, ne of myne eyen sight
And for despit he drank ful unchel moore
An houdes part than he hadde bifoore
And right anon this ious cuyssed speche
Leet this knyghtes sone bifore hym feche
Comaundynge hym he sholde bifore hym stonde
And sodeynly he took his booke in honde
And vp the steng he pulles to his eye
And with an ayre he slouh the child right there
Quod he is al my myght and myne agon
Hath syn binest me myne eyen sight
That sholde I telle thanswere of the knyght
His sone was slayn they is nanoore to seye
Seth nay therfore with lordes hoolt ye pleye
Synged placebo and I shal if I kan
But if it be vn to a poure man
To a poure man men sholde hise vices telle
But nat to a lord thogh he sholde go to helle
Now ious Crist thilke prien
Hoolt he destroyed the synne of Eyscu
For that an hors of his was deynt they nume
Than pt he Leute Babiloigne to wynne
He made that the wynne was so smal
That Iouen myghte nat vse it oon al
So that seyde he that so wel teche kan
Ne be no felawe to an ious man
Ne nt no good man walke by the weye
Left thee repente they is nanoore to seye
Lord Thomas leeue brother lef thyn ire
Thou shalt me fynde as iust as is a squyre
Hoold nat the deueles knyf ay at thyn herte
Thyn Angie sooth thee al to soore smerte
But shewe to me al thy confession
Nay quod the sike man by seint symon
I haue be shryuen this day at my confes
I haue hym toold hoolly al myn estat
Nedeth nanoore to speken of it eeth he
But if me list of myn auenture
Yif me thanne of thy gold to make oure cloystre
Quod he for many a wydwe and many an orfte
Han often men han ben ful wel ateyse
Hath been oure foode oure cloystre for to reyse
And yet god woot vnnethe the fundement
Parmes is/ue of oure pauement
Nys nat a tyl yet with inne oure Bones
By god he often fourty pound for stones

Now help Thomas for hym that hayles helle
ffor elles moste we one lookes selle
And if ye lakke one predicacion
Thanne goth the world al to destruccion
ffor who so wolde us slo this world hyene
So gos me saue Thomas by youre leue
he wolde hyene out of this world the sonne
ffor who kan teche and prechen as we konne
And that is nat of litel tyme quod he
But syn Moyses was or Alise
han fleyes been that fynde of seruyse
Ful thaym̃e / ythankes be oure lorde
Now Thomas helpe for seinte charitee
And sonn anon he sette hym on his knee
This olde man gan faire wel my goos for me
he wolde pt the fleye has been on frye
With his false dissymulacion
Seith his thyng as is in my possession
Quod he that may I yeuen and noon oothey
Ye sey me thus that I am youre brother
Ye certes quod the fleye I trusteth wel
I took oure dame oure lyf and oure sel
Now wel quod he and son shal I yelde
Vnto youre hoolly conuent eyhil I shyne
And in thyn hand thou shalt it haue anon
On this condicion and oothey noon
That thou departe it so my leeue brother
That euery fleye have also muche as oothey
This shalten seye on thy professioun
Without ony fraude or cauillacion
Certeyn it quod this fleye by my feith
And they with al his hand in his he leith
So heer my feith in me shal be no lak
Now thanne put in thyn hand doun by my bak
Seyde this man and grope wel bihynde
Bynethe my buttok there shaltow fynde
A thyng that I have hyd in pryuetee
Anon thought this fleye this shal go set me
And doun his hand he launcheth to the clifte
In hope for to fynde there a yifte
And whan this olde man felte this fleye
Aboute his tukkel gropen there and heere
Amydde his hand he leet the fleye a fast
There nys no capul drawyng in a cast
That myghte have lete a fast of swich a sonn
The fleye vp styte as doth a good bonn
A fals theef quod he for goddes bones
This haftoke for deffut soon for the nones

Thou shalt abye this fayt if that I may
His meynee whiche that herken this affray
Cam leppynge in and chaced out the fleye
And forth he gooth with a ful angry cheere
And fette his felawe they as lay his stoor
He looked as it were a wilde boor
He gnyntte with his teeth so fers he semeth
A sturdy pras doun to the lowes cot he gooth
Where as dwelled a man of greet honour
To whom that he was alwey confessour
This worthy man was lord of that village
This fleye cam as he were in a rage
Where as this lord sat eting at his bord
Unnethes myghte the fleye speke a word
Til atte laste he cryde god yow see
This lord bigan to looke and sayde benedicite
What fleye John what manere lord is this?
I trowe sum manere thyng they is amys
Ye looken as the wode were ful of theuys
Sit doun anon and tel us what youre grief is
And it shal been amended if that I may
I have quod he had a spirit this day
God yelde yow ayeyn in youre village
That in this toun is noon so poure a page
That he nolde have abhominacion
Of that I have perceyved in youre toun
And yet greveth me no thyng so soore
As that this olde chorl with lokkes hoore
Blasphemed hath oure holy dowet eke
Now maister quod this lord I yow biseke
Na maister quod he but dampnedy
Thogh I have has in stole ofrich honour
God liketh nat that Crabbed men we calle
Neither in market ne in youre large halle
Forsoth quod he but tel me al youre grief
Sire quod he an horrible mischief
This fend bitydes is to myn ordre and me
And so I conseyven in each degree
Of holy chirche god amende it soone
Sire quod the lord ye woot what is to doone
Distempre yow nought ye be my confessour
Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour
For goddes love youre patience ye holde
Tel me youre grief and he anon hym tolde
As ye han herd biforn ye woot wel what
The lady of the hous ful fille sat
Til she has herd what the fleye sayde
Ey gossib moodir quod she blisful mayde

Sonono

Is they ogt elles / telle me feithfully
Madame quos he / how thynke ye hey-by :
How that me thynketh quos she ? so gos me speede
I seye / a cheyl hath soon / a cheyles dede
What sholde I seye gos lat hym neede thee
His oke hees / is ful of vanyte
I holde hym / ni a mannes frenesie
Madame quos he / by gos I shal nat lye
But I on hym / oothey Reyes be seke
I shal justifie hym / on al they I speke
This false blasphemo / that chalenges me
To paye that Rol nat depaytes he
To euy man yliche / with meschaunce
The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce
And in his septe / he rolles up and doun
How hadde the cheyl this ymaginacioun
To shette oRich a vyleine to a siege
Reuerse est ey nowe / hede I of oRich maneere
I trowe / the deuel putte it in his myende
In ays wetnes shal they no man fynde
Biforn this day / of oRich a question
Pepes / it was a shrewes conclusion
That euy man / sholde haue yliche his payt
As of the soun / or sauour / of a fayt
O vile prouse cheyl / I shette his face
So wyes quos the lord / with hasse grace
Who herde euer / of oRith a thyng er nowe
To euy man ylike / tel me howe ?
It is an impossible / it may nat be
Ey nye cheyl / god lete thee neede thee
The rumblynge of a fayt / and euy soun
Is but of ey- reuberacioun
And eke it wasteth litel and litel a Wey
Ther is no man kan deuinen hy my fey
If that it were departes equally
What to my cheyl / ho yet hath shette so hy
On to my confessour / to day he spak
I holde hym certeyn / a demoniak
Now ete ye nowe mete / and lat the cheyl go pleye
Lat hym go longe hym self a deuel weye

The lordes of the lordes ordres and his kenne / for departynge of the fayt on twelue

Hold stood the lordes ordres at the lord
That half his mete / and herde word by word
Of alle thynges / whiche that I haue sayd
My lord quos he / beth nat yuele apayed

Somonours tale

I Wolde telle for a golden cloth
To yow myn hoste / so ye be nat wroth
Hoc that this fayre / euene vers shal be
Among youre couent / if it lyked me
Wel quod the lord / and thou shalt haue anon
A golden cloth / by god and by seint John
Quod he / than pt the frere is faithles
Outen wyf / or ytrumpynge of auhat
Ye make a cartwheel nn to this halle
But looke that it haue his spokes alle
Twelue spokes hath a cartwheel commonly
And bring me thanne · xij · freres moot ye hy
For twelue is a couent as I gesse
The confessour heere for his worthynesse
Shal yfounde vp the nombre of his couent
Thanne shal they knele down by oon assent
And to euery spokes ende nn this manere
Ful softly leye his nose shal a frere
Youre noble confessour thorgh goddes grace
Shal holde his nose vpright vnder the nauele
Thanne shal this cherl / pt bely stif and toght
As any tabour / been hyder ybrought
And sette hym on the wheel right of this cart
Vpon the nauele / and make hym lete a fart
And ye shul seen vp ryse of myn hyf
Ey goode Hugh that is denoustratif
That equally the soun of it wol wende
And eke the stynk vn to the spokes ende
Ianne pt this worthy man youre confessour
By cause he is a man of grete honour
Shal haue the firste fruyt as resoun is
As yet the noble ostage of freres is
The worthy men of hem shul hyre be seyues
And certeinly he hath it wel deserues
He hath to day taught vs so muche good
With preching in the pulpit them he stood
That I may vouche sauf I sey for me
He hadde the fyneste onel of fastes thre
And so wolde al the couent hadde he
He beeth hym so fayre and hoolsly
The lord the lady and alle men saue the frere
Sayde pt Iankyn spak in this matere
As wel as Euclide or Ptholomee
Touchynge this cherl they seyde subtilte
And helden it made hym speke as he spak
He nys no fool ne no demonyak
And Iankyn hath ytoume a newe gowne
Myn tale is doon we been almoost at towne

Here endeth the Somonours tale

Here folweth the prologe of the clerkes tale of Oxenford

THe clerk of Oxenford oure hoost sayde
Ye ryde as coy and stille as doth a mayde
Were nevere spouse syttynge at the bord
This sayd ne herde I of youre tonge a word
I holde ye studie aboute some sophyme
But Salomon seith every thyng hath tyme

Transcribe

For goddes sake as beth of bettre cheere
It is no tyme for to studien heere
Telle us some myrie tale by youre fey
For what man that is entred in a pley
He nedes moot unto the pley assente
But preching nat as freres doon in lente
To make us for oure olde synnes wepe
Ne that thy tale make us nat to slepe

Transcribe

Telle us some murie thyng of aventures
Youre termes youre colours and youre figures
Keep hem in stoor til so be that ye endite
Heigh stile as whan that men to kynges write
On pleteth nowe at this tyme we hoote preye
That ye may understonde that we seye

Transcribe

This worthy clerk benignely answerde
Hoost quod he I am under youre yerde
Ye han of us as now the governance
And therfore wol I do youre obeisance
As fer as reson axeth hardily
I wol youre telle a tale which that I
Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk
As preved by his wordes and his werk
He is now deed and nayled in his cheste
I preye to god so yeve his soule reste

Transcribe

Fraunceys petrark the laureat poete
Highte this clerk whos rethorik sweete
Enlumyned al ytalie of poetrie
As lynyan dide of philosophie
Or lawe or other art particuler
But deeth that wol nat suffren heer
But as it seye a tempestous morwe
Hem bothe hath slayn and alle oure sorwe

Transcribe

Of Oxenford

But forthy to tellen of this worthy man
That taughte me this tale as I bigan
I seye that first with heigh stile he enditeth
Er he the body of his tale writeth
A prohemye in the which discryveth he
Ponthous and of Galiues the contree
And speketh of Appenyn the hilles hye
That been the bounder of Cesilmannbaldye

Pantalcõ

Est as ytalie latitudine desilis ex appennin montis altissimi qui de nebula cuspitans liquido se se mgerit etheri mons eximie nobilis natura padi ortu nobilissimi qui lacu fonte labitur exiguo orientem cont eoleum fert

Pantalcõ

Thus of mount Cesulis in special
Where as the poo out of a welle smal
Taketh his first springing and his cours
That estward ay encresseth in his cours
To Emelwardes to speken and devyse
The which a long thing were to devyse
And therfor as to my jugement
me thynketh it a thing impertinent
Save that me wolde conveyen his matere
But this his tale which that ye may here

Pantalcõ

Here bigynneth the tale of the Clerk of Oxenford

Ther is at the west syde of ytaille
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde
A lusty playne habundant of vitaille
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde
That founded were in tyme of fadres olde
And many another delitable sighte
And Italyes this noble contree highte

Hinc cecil ad padi ripam Cesulis
Pha Gallicaq; vice Castell

Pexata planicies

A lyttel thilom lord was of that lond
As was hise worthy elders hym biforn
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise liges both lasse and moore
Thus in delit he lyveth and hath doon yoore
Biloved and drad through favour of fortune
Both of hise lordes and of his commune

Ther with he was to speke as of lynage
The gentilleste yboren of lumbardye
A fayr persone and strong and yong of age
And ful ynough of manly and of curtesye
Discreet ynough his contree for to gye
Save that in conne thynges pte he was to blame
And Walter was this yonge lordes name

Clerk

Blame hym thus that he consydereth noght
In tyme comynge what hym myghte bityde
But in his lust present was al his thoght
As for to hauke and hunte on ony syde
Wel ny alle otherе tymes leet he slyde
And eek he nolde and that was worst of alle
Wedde no wyf for noght pt may bifalle

Cadiatim

Ionly that point his peple bar so coore
That flokmeele on a day they to hym wente
And oon of hem that wysest was of loore
Or elles that the lord best wolde assente
That he sholde telle hym what his peple mente
Or elles koude he shewe wel eek matere
He to the walkys seyde as ye shul heere

Cui nunc humanitas optime nanchio

O noble wyf yowe humanitee
Assenyeth us to yeue us hardinesse
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle oure heynesse
Accepteth lord now for yowr gentillesse
That we with pitous herte in to yow pleyne
And lat yowre eres nat my voys desdeyne

Al have I noght to doone in this matere
More than another man hath in this place
Yet for as muche as ye my lord so deere
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace
I dar the bettre aske of yow a space
Of audience to shewen oure requeste
And ye my lord to don right as yow leste

For certes lord so wel us liketh yow
And al yowre werk and ever han don pt we
We koude nat us self devysen how
We myghte lyven in more felicitee
Save o thyng lord if yowre wille be
That for to been a wedded man yow leste
Shulde we yowre peple in coniugyo leste

Wolde ye yowre nekke under that blissful yok
Of coniugacioun noght of servyse
Which pt men clepeth spousaille or wedlok
And thenketh lord among yowre thoghtes wyse
How pt oure dayes passe in sondry wyse
For thogh we slepe or wake or rome or ryde
Ay fleeth the tyme it nyl no man abyde

And thogh youre grene youthe flouse as yit
Ou crepeth age alkey as stille as stoon
And deeth manaceth euery age and ouyt
Ou ech estaat for they estapeth noon
And also drein as he knowe echoon
That he shul deye as wel as I or he alle
Deen of that day that deeth shal on vs falle

Accepteth thanne of vs the tendre entente
That nedes yet refusen thyn heeste
And we hol lord if that ye wole assente
Shese yowe a lyf in short tyme atte leeste
Born of the gentilleste and of the ueeste
Of al this lande so that it ogh̄te seme
Honour to god and yow as we kan deeme

Deliure vs out of al this bisy drede
And take a lyf for hye goddes grace
ffor if it so bifalle as god forbede
That thurgh youre deeth youre lyne sholde stake
And that a straunge successour sholde take
youre heritage o wo were vs alyue
Wherfore we pray yow hastily to lyue

Quod he certes I wil do my peyne
I may the auenture renne in veyne
Or stonde therby I may nat warne it
Whan it is come I wil me shape therfro
But I am bounden in a bussh so
Wot I wel what I shal do now
I wil nat lye to yow certeyn for no thyng
Myn herte is broken my wittes vnsad
I am nat wel I wene I shal be mad
I am shent so pitously I mene
I may nat longe liue I tel yow heere
But go ye forth lordynges I wil abyde
Wel may ye sorwe for your owene syde
Go forth go forth that is best I rede
And at the leeste er ye departe fro me
Yet preye I yow for the reuerence of me
That ye wil graunte me my firste bone
For I wil speke of game and nat of grone
A wyf I preye yow of your gentilesse
Let me somwhat of my counseil blesse
And lat me telle hem al my wo
Er that I passe fro hennes al so
I shal yow telle a litel thyng
That longeth to the lawe of housbondyng

Ywis quod he my deere brother
Me reweth sore I am your debtor
And gladly wolde I quyte yow my dette
As wisly help me seynt thomas of kent
But I am pore and knowen ful bare
Now sire quod he if that I may nat fare
As to myn honour at the leeste weye
Thanne wil I selle my part of the deeth
Shortly I loue yow by my trouthe
Telle on thy tale and haue heer my feith

Now than quod he heere shal ye seen anon
Of curteys word I am ful sklendre
My wyf I loue as wel as any man
Ful wel she knowe that I hir trewely kan
But if I hadde seyd hir yet a shame
And if that she my conseil wolde kepe
I wolde tel yow fro poynt to poynt
How that I failled of myn entente
Thanne wolde ye seye anon ful verayly
I wedded me with greet solempnyte
And etc with greet reuelrye
And leefful was my wyf of port and pleye
Right as hir list bar I ful lowe stroke
Ne neuer wolde I hir wil withstonde
In thyng that myghte lyke hir herte or plese
And leefful was my wyf to goon where hir leste
I nolde nat knowe fayn hir wil or lyke
I folwed hir as doth a shadwe a pyke
Wel knowe ye that a wyf wil doon al hir list
And nat a straw recche of mannes reed
And namely if he be a man of dede
Wel knowe ye that my wyf and I also
Wel many a day han holden stable wone
For I am hende and yong and wel bigon
And day by day I serue at table
A lady lasse of hir degree
And ful wel koude she preise and honoure
My poure estaat and eke my gentilesse
And wel she knew I dide hir noble seruyse
Bothe in my chambre and eke in other wyse
Ful ofte tyme she thanked me
And for hir wit and for hir wommanhede
And for hir bounte and for hir estaatlynesse
She made me bothe hir lord and hir maystre
And for I nolde encombred be for ese
I hir assigned honour and pleasaunce
I bar me wel I hadde my bench and mete
Er any man in al the place
And yaf hir fader and hir mooder eke
Ful ofte tyme yifte of greet prys
And ofred for hir ful worshipfully
Whan that I rood by hir contree
And sente hir yifte of venysoun
And fostred hir brother out of doun
And stille I do and euere wil
And spare for no cost I wil nat spare
I wot this thyng me oghte for to do
And forthermore I wil for hir also
Wel more than I yet to hir auowe
But now to purpos lat me see
I pray yow that ye be nat wroth
I wil nat come to my tale as yit
But to my tale anon right thus
Two yeer and more lyk as god wolde
We lyued in ful greet prosperitee
And in myn hous ful honestly
And at my bord ther dyned many a man
That for to seye a man of litel reed
Ne of his wyf ne of his governaunce
Ne of his rente ne of his chevysaunce
But al was drawe after my wyf and me
And after hir estaat honestly
We hadde plenty of al and namely
Of mete and drynke and thynges whiche
That longen to a worshipful mesnee
And of array right manly and freshe
And so bifel that in our toun
Ther was a man of greet possessioun
A riche man and wel to thryue
In which he hadde a greet mesnee
To kepe which was his charge
And of gentil folk he hadde right
Of squyers and of yomen eke
To serue in his hous by day by nyght
Of which he hadde nat a few
Ful honestly his folk he fedde
Ful wel biloued and ful wel he spedde
For which he was ful wel biloued
And sikerly a lord it hym byhoued
His porte was his heritage
For which he was ful wel biloued
And sikerly a lord it hym byhoued
His porte was his heritage
For which he was ful wel biloued
And sikerly a lord it hym byhoued
His porte was his heritage

Clerk.

Lat me allone/ m̃ chesynge of myn lyf
That thange/ vpon my bak/ I wole ensure
But I yow preye/ and thange vpon youre lyf
That lyf that I take/ ye me assure
To kepe hym/ whil that hir lyf may dure
In wo/ and wele/ bothe heele and euel/ wheele
As ose/ an Emperes doghter keele

And forthermoore/ this shal ye serteyn/ that ye
Agayn my thoyre/ shul neither gruche ne stryue
ffor erth/ I shal/ forgoon my liberte
At youre requeste/ as euer moot I thryue
Ther as myn herte is set/ ther wol I yiue
And but ye wole assente in this manere
I prey yow/ speketh namoore of this matere

With hertely wyl/ they answeren and assenten
To al this thyng/ they seyde no wight nay
Besekynge hym of grace/ er that they wenten
That he/ wolde graunten hem a certein day
Of his spousaille/ as soone as euer he may
ffor yet alwey/ the peple somwhat drede
left pt the mayden/ no lyf/ wolde wede

The graunted hem a day/ swich as hym leste
On which/ he wolde be redy certeynly
And seyde/ he bad al this at his requeste
And they/ with humble entente/ buxomly
Knelynge vp on hir/ knees ful reuerently
Hym thonken alle/ and thus they han an ende
Of hir entente/ and hoom agayn they wende

And heer vpon/ he to his officeres
Comaundeth/ for the feste to purueye
And to his pryue knyghtes and squieres
Swich thynge yaf/ as hym liste on hem leye
And they/ to his comandement obeye
And ech of hem/ dooth al his diligence
To doon/ vn to the feeste reuerence

Explicit prima pars

of Oxenford ||

Incipit secunda pars ||

Right fer fro thilke paleys hommable
Ther as this wayke in his manage
There stood a throop of site delitable
In which that poure folk of that village
Hadden hir beestes and hir herbergage
And of hir labour took hir sustenance
After that the erthe yaf hem habundance

Amonges thise poure folk they dwelte a man
Which pt was holden pourest of hem alle
But hye god sometyme sendeth kan
His grace in to a litel oxes stalle
Janicula men of that throop him calle
A doghter hadde he fair ynogh to sighte
And Griselda this yonge mayden highte

But for to speke of vertuous beautee
Thanne was she oon the fayreste under sonne
For poureliche yfostred up was she
No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte yronne
Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
She dranke and for she wolde vertu plese
She knew wel labour but noon ydel ese

But though this maydе tendre were of age
Yet in the brest of hir virginitee
Ther was enclosed ripe and sad corage
And in gret reverence and charitee
Hir olde poure fader fostred she
A few sheep spinning on feeld she kepte
She wolde nought been ydel til she slepte

And whan she homward cam she wolde bringe
Wortes or otheре herbes tymes ofte
The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir lyvinge
And made hir bed ful hard and no thing softe
And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on lofte
With everich obeisaunce and diligence
That child may doon to fadres reverence

Upon Griselde this poure creature
Ful ofte sithe this markes caste his eye
As he on hunting rood paraventure
And whan pt it fel pt he might espye
He nought with wantonnesse looking of folye
His eyen caste on hir but in sad wyse
Upon hir chere he gan him ofte avyse

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Comendynge in his herte his Conuersesse
And eek his vertu passynge any wight
Of so yong age as wel in chiere as dede
For though the peple had no greet insight
In vertu he considered ful right
His bountee and disposed that he wolde
Wedde his oonly if euere he wedde sholde

The day of weddyng cam but no wight kan
Telle that Conuerain that it sholde be
For which merueille wondred many a man
And seyden whan that they were in prisoun
Wol nat oure lord yet leue his vanytee?
Wol he nat wedde alias alias the while!
Why wolde he thus himself and vs bigile?

But natheles this wyse hath don make
Of gemmes set in gold and in asure
Broches and ringes for Grisildis sake
And of his clothyng took he the mesure
By a mayde lyk to his stature.
And eek of othere ornementz alle
That vn to swich a weddyng sholde falle

The tyme of undren of the same day
Approcheth that this weddyng sholde be
And al the palays put was in array
Bothe halle and chambres ech in his degree
Houses of office stuffed with plentee
Of mete and drynke of deyntevous vitaille
That may be founde as fer as last trauaille

The ryal wyf ech lady ech bachelor
Lordes and ladyes in his compaignye
The whiche that to the feeste were ycleped
And of his retenue the baccelrye
With many a soun of sondry melodye
Vn to the village of the which I tolde
In this array the righte way they han holde

Grisilde of this ful innocent
That for hir shapen was al this array
To fecchen water at a welle is went
And cometh hoom as soone as ever she may
For er she hadde herd seyd that thilke day
The mayden sholde wedde and if she myghte
She wolde fayn han seyn some of that sighte

Of Oxenford.

Quod expeditus cuius alius ad ci
rcuitum diu sui consortium cum
puellis comitibz frayaret.

She thoghte / & sholo / with otheye mayden stonde
That been my felawes / ni ouys aye and se
The waykey sesse / and they-foze schol & fonde
To doon at hoom / as soons as it may be
The labour / which that longeth vn to me
And thanne / may / at leyser hym biholde
Yf ohe this obey / vn to the castel holde

And as she holde / on hir thresshfold gon
The wayker can / and gan hym foz to calle
And she set doun / hir water pot anon
Biside the thresshfold / in an oxes stalle
And doun vp on hir knes she gan to falle
And eek hir contenance / kneleth stille
Til she has seyd / what was the lozdes wille

Ait expeditus tuus alius ad ci
rcuitum diu sui consortium cum
puellis comitibz frayaret.

Quam velocius cogitabundus
rediens eius expellans uoto.

This thoghtful wayker / spak vn to this mayde
Ful sobrely / and seyde in this manere
Where is youre fader / o Griselde he sayde
And she with reuerence / in humble cheere
Answerde / lozd / he is al redy heere
And in she gooth / with outen lenger lette
And to the wayker / she hir fader fette

He by the hand / thanne took this olde man
And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde aseyde
Ianuam / & neither may ne kan
Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde
If that thou vouche sauf / what so bityde
Thy doghter schol & take / ex p^t & vende
As foz my wyf / vn to hir lynes ende

Thou lovest me / & woot it wel certeyn
And art my feithful liege man yboze
And al that liketh me / & day wel seyn
It liketh thee / and specially therefoze
Tel me that point that & haue seyd biforе
If that thou holt / vn to that ꝑpos stacke
To take me / as foz thy wyf in lacke

This ordeyn ce / this man astonyed so
That wel she nay abayst / and al quakyng
She stood / unnethes seyde she moo
But oonly thus / lozd quod she my willyng
Is as ye schole / ne ageyns / youre likyng
I nol no thyng / ye lat my lozd so deere
Right as youre list / gouerneth this mateere

Clerk.

Tyet quod this wayfyȝe softely
That in thy chaumbre I. and thou, and she
Haue a collacion, and rostede thyȝ!
Ffor I wol axe, if it hyr will be
To be myȝ wyf, and pelle hyr after me
And al this shal be doon in thyȝ presence
I wol nought speke out of thyn audience

And in the chaumbre, whil they sete aboute
Hir tretyȝs, which as ye shal after heere
The peple cam in to the hous with oute
And wondred hem in hir honeste maneere
And tentifly, she kepte hir fadres heere
But outrely, Griseldis wonder myȝhte
Ffor nede est ne cauȝh she ech a sighte

Ho wondre is, thogh she were astoned
To seen so greet a gest come in that place
She nede nas, to ech a chere enoned
Ffor which, she looked, ful pale face
But shortly, forth this tale for to chace
Thise ilke wordes, pt the wayfyȝs sayde
To this benigne, verray feithful mayde

Thyselfe she seyde, ye shal wel understonde
It liketh to youre fadre and to me
That I youre wyf here, and ech it wayȝ so stonde
As I suppose, ye wol that it so be
But thise demaundes, ax I first wolde he
That erth it shal be doon, in hastif wyse
Wol ye assente, or elles youre avyse

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al myn lust, and that I frely may
As me best thynketh, so youre plesance or smerte
And nere ye to grucche it, nyght ne day
And eek whan I you seye ye, ne seyn nat nay
Neither in word ne frownyng contenance
Swere this and here I ocheste youre alliance

Sondrynge or on this word, quakynge for drede
She seyde lord, ydigne and unknowe
Am I, to thilke honour, pt ye me beede
But as ye wole youre self, right so wol I.
And here I ocheste, that nere ye fully
I nyl yow disobeye
Ffor to be deed, though me were loth to deye

¶ of Oxenforde.

¶ This is ynogh / Custe myn quod he
And forth he gooth / with a ful sobre cheere
Out at the dore / and after that cam she
And to the peple / he sayde in this manere
This is my wyf quod he / pt standeth heere
Honoureth hyr / and loueth hyr yf ye leeue
Who so me loueth / they is man more to preye

And for that no thyng / of hyr olde geere
She sholde brynge in to his hous he bad
That men / sholde distroublen hyr nyght cheere
Of which thise ladyes / were nat nyght glad
To handle hyr clothes / whan time she was clad
But nathelees / this mayde knyght of hecke
Fro foot to heed / hyr clothes han al nekke

Hyr heris han they kembd / that lay entresses
Ful nesly / and with hyr fyngres smale
A corone on hyr heed / they han ydresses
And sette hyr / ful of rosiers grete and smale
Of hyr array / what sholde I make a tale
Amonge the peple hyr knewe / for hyr fayrnesse
Whan she translated was in swich richesse

¶ This wyght / hath hyr spoused er a nyght
Ywroght for the same cause / and thamme hyr sette
Upon an hors swyft and wel amblyng
And to his paleys / er he lenger lette
With ioyful peple pt hyr lad and mette
Conueyed hyr / and thus the day they spende
In ioye / til the sonne gan descende

And shortly / forth this tale for to chace
I seye / that to this noble wyf ysesse
God hath swich fauo[ur] sent hyr of his grace
That it ne semed nat by likelynesse
That she was / born and fed in rudenesse
As in a cote / or in an oxe stalle
But norissed / in an emperoures halle

To eny wight / she wayen as so deere
And worshipful / pt folk they / she was bore
And hom hyr bisshe / knewe hyr yeer by yeere
Amonge the peple / but specially / therfore
That she to vertu / of which I spak bifore
She yaffe ey[e] / for as by conjecture
Hem thoughte / she was another creature

¶ Atq; apud omnes cu[m] fide cauta
Senectabit fea est vix ulli[us] rei
Illig; rigide nolunt p̄suadere
Posse fames nata esse tam[en] cute
Tam[en] nuq; decor ea bloy & fuitas
Atq; dulcedo quib; one alios nequi
Ibi magn amoris affligere[n]t

Explicit

ffor though that she vertuous was she
She was envyed / wt such excellence
Of thekes goode / yet wt hough bountee
And so discreet / and fayr of eloquence
So benigne / and so digne of reverence
And koude so / the peples hepte embrace
That ech hir loved / that looked on hir face

Nought oonly of Salvces wt the toun
Publices was / the beautee of hir name
But eek biside / wt many a regioun
If oon seide wel / another seyde the same
Of hir fresshe beautee the walles
That wen and bolwen / as wel yonge as olde
Goon to Salvce / upon hir to biholde

Sic Walter humili quidem et
insigni ac pio uxore monumq honestatis omnia dei in pace etc

Thus walter lordeli / lyvyng / but royally
Weddes / with fortunat honestetee
In goddes pees / lyveth ful esily
At hoom / and outward / ek ynogh had he
And for he stroght / that envye heigh degree
Was vertu his / the peple hym held
A prudent man / and that is seyn ful seeldo

Hijus eximia virtute tanta sub in
opia statutente ta pspicax deprehendit vulgo prudentissim hebat

That oonly this Griseldis / thurgh hir wit
Koude al the feet / of Cupide humblenesse
But eek / ek shal that the case requised it /
The comune profit / koude she redresse
Ther nas discord / rancour / ne hevynesse
In al that land / that she ne koude apese
And wisely / bynge hem alle in reste & ese

Ac pater absente / filies pne nobilium
discordias dissidens atq; componens
ta grubs pstrosis tanta ip matur
tate & iudicij estate vt omes ad
suite publica demissa celo fecisse p
dicaverit

Though that hir housbonde absent were / anon
If gentil men / or other of hir contree
Were wroth / she koude bringen hem anon
To vise / and pees / or wordes hadde she
And juggements of so grete equitee
That she from heven sent was as men wende
To peple to save / and every wrong tamende

That longe tyme / after that this Grisild
Was deed / she a doghter hath ybore
Al had hir leve / have born a man child
Glad was this marchys / and the folk therfore
For though a mayde child / come al bifore
She may / vn to a man child atteyne
By likelihed / syn she nys nat barreyne

Explicit secunda pars

Explicit tercia pars ...

Incipit tercia pars ...

Quer fil, as it bifalleth tymes mo ·
Than p^t this child had croukes but a thrope
This wyfes wit his herte longeth so
To tempte his lyf hir cruelnesse for to knowe
That he ne myghte out of his herte throwe
This mervellous desir his lyf taffaye
Nedelees god woot he thoghte hir for taffaye

He hadde assayed hir ynogh biforne
And found hir eke good that nedes it
Hir for to tempte and alwey more and more
Thought som men preise it for a subtil wit
But as for me I seye that yuele it sit
To assaye a lyf whan p^t it is no nede
And putten hir in angwyssh and in drede

For which this wyfes clogiste in this maneye
He tan allone a myght they as she say
With stierne face and ful trouble cheere
And seyde thus Custilde quod he that day
That I yow took out of youre power away
And putte yow in estaat of heigh noblesse
Ye have nat that forgeten as I gesse

I seye Custilde this present dignitee
In which that I have put yow as I trowe
Maketh yow nat forgeten for to be
That I yow took in povre estaat ful lowe
For any cele ye moot youre owen knowe
Take heede of ony word that ye yow seye
They is no knight that hereth it but eke he preye

Ye woot youre self wel how p^t ye tan preye
In to this hous it is nat longe ago
And thoughte to me p^t ye be lief and deye
Yn to myn gentilesse ye de no thyng so
They seyn to hem it is gret shame and wo
For to be subgetz and to been in servage
To thee that born art of a smal village

And namely with thy bogistes was yfore
Thise wordes han they spoken boutelees
But I desire as I have doon biforne
To lyve myn lyf and hem in reste and pees
I may nat in this caas be recheeles
I moot doon ek thy bogistes for the beste
Nat as I wolde but as myn peple leste

Incepit vt sit michi exaltem
cui iam ablactata esset infantula
miserabile quedam qui laudabile
cupiditas est experta cane fide
coniugis experiendi astutiam et eam
atque eam ieteruptandi ...

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And yet god woot this is ful looth to me
But natheles / with oute youre wityng /
I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he
That ye to me assente / as nu this thyng /
Shewe me youre pacience / and youre wetyng /
That ye me lighte / and shewe nu youre lyking
That day / that maked was our mariage

Certain she was hevd al this / she noght answered
Neither nu word / or chiere or contenance
For as it semed / she was nat agreved
She seyde lord / al lyth nu youre plesance
My wyl and I / with hertely obeysance
Been youres al / and ye mowe save & spille
Youre owene thyng / werketh after youre wille

Ther may no thyng / god so my soule save
Liken to yow / that may displese me
Ne I ne desire / no thyng / for to have
Ne drede for to lese / save oonly thee / Sel yee
This wyl is nu myn herte / and ay shal be
No lengthe of tyme / or deeth may this deface
Ne chaunge my corage / to another place

Alas was this maykyns / of hir answering /
Lat yet he feyned / as he best nat do
Al dremy was his cheere / and his lokyng /
Than pt she sholde / out / of the chambre go
Soone after this / a fourlong wey or two
He pryvely / hath told al his entente
Unto a man / and to his wyf hym wente

A maner sergeant / was this yong man
The which pt feithful ofte / he founden hadde
In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan
Doon execucion on thynges badde
The lord knew wel / that he hym loved & dradde
And whan this sergeant / wiste the lordes wille
Unto the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille

Madame he seyde / ye moote foryeve it me
Though I do thyng / to which I am constreyned
Ye been so wys / that ful wel knowe ye
That lordes heestes / mowe nat been yfeyned
They mowe wel been / biwailled and complevned
But men moote nede / unto hir lust obeye
And so wol I / ther is na moore to seye

¶ Of Oxenforde ...

This child Jan comandes for to take
And spak namoore / but out the child he hente
Despitously / and gan a cheepe make
As though he wolde han slayn it ey-he wente
Cheldis / moot al suffren and consente
And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille
And let this cruel Sergeant doon his wille

Suspecious / was the diffame of this man
Suspect his fame / suspect his word also
Suspect the tyme / in which he this bigan
Allas hir doghter / that she loues so
She wende he wolde han slayen it right tho
But nathelees / she neither wep ne syked
Conseutynge hir / to that the wykked lyked

But atte laste / to speken she bigan
And meekely / she to the Sergeant preyde
So as he was / a worthy gentil man
That she moste kisse hir child / er pt it deyde
And in hir barm / this litel child she leyde
With ful sad face / and gan the child to kisse
And lulled it / and after gan it blisse

And thus she seyde / in hir benigne wys
Fare wel my child / for shal thee neuer see
But with-/ thee / haue marked ⁊t the croys
Of thilke-/ fader / blessed moote he be
That for vs deyde / upon a croys of tree
Thy soule litel child / I bitake
For this nyght / shaltow dyen for my sake

I trowe / that to a norice in this cas
It hard been hard / this reuthe for to se
Wel mighte a mooder / thanne han cryd allas
But nathelees / so stid and stedefast was she
That she endured al / and to the Sergeant meekely she sayde
Haue here-/ again / your litel yonge mayde

Goth now quod she / and doth my lordes heeste
But o thing / wil I preye your of your grace
That but my lord / forbad your atte leeste
Burieth this litel body / in some place
That beestes ne no briddes / it to race
But he no word / wol to that wyes seye
But took the child / and wente upon his weye

¶ Clerk.

¶ This sergeaunt can vn to his lord ageyn
And of Cyrsildis loues / and hyr cheere
He tolde hym point for point / in short and pleyn
And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere
Soucrestat this lord / hath pouere in his manere
But nathelees / his pore heeld he stille
As lordes doon / whan they ther sul han hyr wille

And bad his sergeaunt / that he prively
Sholde this child / softe stynde and stappe
With alle circumstances / tendrely
And carie it vn a cofre / or vn a lappe
But vpon peyne / his heed of for to swappe
That no man sholde knowe / of his entente
Ne whennes / ne whider that he wente

But at Bolaigne / to his suster deere
That thilke tyme / of Pauie was Countesse
He sholde it take / and shewe hyr this matere
Biseekynge hyr / to doon hyr bisynesse
This child to fostre / vn alle gentillesse
And whos child that it was / he bad hym hyde
Fro vn euery wight / for ought pat may bityde

¶ The sergeaunt gooth / and hath fulfild this thyng
But to this mayden / now retourne we
For now gooth she / ful faste ymaginyng
If by his chyres cheere / he myghte se
Or by hyr wordes apeyre / that she
Were chaunged / but he neuere hyr couthe fynde
But euere vn oon / ylike glad and hynde

As glad / as humble / as busy vn seruyse
And eek vn dede / as she was wont to be
Was / she to hym vn eny maner wyse
Or of hyr doghter / nyght a word spak she
Vn oon accident / for noon aduersitee
Was seyn vn hyr / ne neuere hyr doghter name
Ne nempned she / vn ernest / ner in game

¶ Explicit tercia pars

¶ Of Oyeuſoyd ...
Deſunt quatuor quarta ...

¶ transiuant hoc in statu anni ...
nis. dñi ecce grauida &c ...

In this estaat they passes been fourse yeer
Er ese with childe was but as god wolde
A man child ese bar by this Emelye
ffull gracious and fair for to biholde
And whan that folk it to his fadey tolde
Nat coudy he but al his comfort mesye
Was for this child and god they thanke and preye

Whan it was two yeer old and fro the breſt
Departed of his norice on a day
This wayke taughte yet another leſt
To tempte his dyf yet ofter if he may
O nedeles was ese temptes in assay
But wemen nil knowe no mesure
Whan pt they fynde a patient creature

¶ Dyf quod this wayke ye han herd er this
Wy people sikly beyth owre mariage
And namely with my sone ybore is
Wroke is it wrore than ene in al owre age
The mirour cleeth myn heyte and my corage
ffor to myne eyes couth the voyde so soute
That it ekel my destroyes hath myn heyte

¶ Wroke seyd they thus whan Emelye is agon
Thanne shal the blood of Lancke succede
And been owre lord for oothey have ne noon
Which wordes couth my people out of drede
Wel oughte q of which myn[e] taken heede
ffor certeinly q drede which sentence
Though they nat pleyn speke in myn audience

¶ Wolde hyne in pees if that q myghte
Wherfore q am disposed outterly
As q his custey serues by myghte
Right so thenke q to serue hym pryuely
This wame q yoke pt ye nat sodeynly
Out of youre self for no wo wolde outreye
Beth patient and they of q yoke preye

¶ Wame quod she seyd thus and ene shal
Wol no thyng ne nyl no thyng certayn
But as yoke list naught greueth me at al
Though pt my doughter and my sone be slayn
At youre commandement this is to sayn
I have nought has no part of childeren tweyne
But fyrst sikneſſe and after deeth ne drede

¶ transiuant hoc in statu anni ...
nis. dñi ecce grauida &c ...

¶ Et olim audisti populum meum ...
legem nostrum ferre circumbin &c ...

¶ Et olim audisti populum meum
legem meam cepere proximum
commune ...

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ye been oure lord, dooth erth youre owene thyng
Right as yow list, ayeth no need at me
ffor as I leste at hoom, al myn clothyng
Whan I first cam to yow, nght so quod she
leste I myn eyl, and al myn liberte
And took youre clothyng, wherfore I yow preye
Dooth youre pleasance, I wol youre list obeye

And certes, if I hadde prescience
youre wyl to knowe, er ye youre list me tolde
I wolde it doon, withouten necligence
But now I woot youre list, and what ye wolde
Al youre plesance, feyne and stable I holde
ffor trist I, that my deeth, wolde do yow ese
Right gladly, wolde I dyen yow to plese

Deth may nought make no comparisoun
Unto youre love, and whan this wyndys ouy
The constance of his wyf he caste adoun
His eyen two, and wondreth pt she may
In patience, suffre al this affray
And forth he goth with drery contenance
But to his herte, it was ful greet plesance

This ilke sergeant, in the same wyse
That he hire doghter caughte, right so he
Or worse, if men worse kan devyse
Hath hent hire sone, pt ful was of beautee
And eke in age, so pacient was she
That she no chiere made of heuynesse
But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse

Save this, she preyde hym, that if he myghte
Hir litel sone, he wolde in erthe grave
His tendre lymes, delicat to sighte
ffro foweles and fro bestes for to save
But she noon answere, of hym myghte have
He wente his wey, as hym no thyng ne roghte
But to Bolovgne, he tendrely it broghte

This wyndys, wondres ofte lenger the moore
Upon hir patience, and if that he
Ne hadde sothly knowen therbifoore
That parfitly hir children loved she
He wolde have wend, pt of some subtilte
And of malice, or for som cruel corage
That she hadde suffred this pt was in age

Of Cyrus

But wel ye knowe that next hym self certayn
Ye loues hir children best in euery wyse
But nowe of women, wolde I eyen fayn
If thise assayes, myghte nat suffise
What konde a study housbonde more deuyse
To preeue hir wyfhod or hir stedefastnesse
And he continuyng euere in stedfastnesse

But they been folk of swich condicion
That whan they have a certein purpos take
They kan nat stynte of hir entencion
But ay ryght as they were bounden to that stake
They wol nat of that first purpos slake
Right so this wyues fulliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed

He wayteth if by word or countenance
That she to hym was changed of corage
But nedes konne he fynde variance
She was ay oon in herte and in visage
And ay the forther that he was in age
The more trewe if that it were possible
She was to hym in love and more penible

For which it semed thus that of hem two
Ther nas but o wyl for as walwy leste
The same lust was hir plesance also
And god be thanked al fil for the beste
She cheryssed wel for no worldly tweste
A wyf as of hir self no thyng ne sholde
Wille in effect but as hir housbonde wolde

The clamour of walwy ofte and wyde sprad
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly
For he a pryue woman wedded hadde
Hath mordred bothe his children prively
Swich murmur was among hem commonly
No wonder is for to the people lyke
Ther semed no wys but that they mordred were

For which whan his people they biforn
Hadde lowen hym wel the clamour of his diffame
made hem that they hym hated therfore
To been a mordrere is an hateful name
But nathelees for ernest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos nolde stente
To tempte his wyf was set al his entente

Incipit de Custancia & Walteyo
de bona fama clerkestere

Whan that his doghter · xij · yeer was of age
He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse
Informes of his wyl / sente his message
Comaundynge hem / swiche bulles to devyse
As to his purpos nay suffyse
How p^t the pope / as for his peples reste
Was hym to wedde / anothey if hym leste

I seye he has they wolde countrefete
The popes bulles / makynge mencion
That he hath leve his fiste wyf to lete
As by the popes dispensacion
To stynte vengeaunce and dissencion
Betwixe his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle
The which they han publiced atte fulle

The nice peple / as it no wonder is
Conseyven ful wel / that it hadde be ngh̄t so
But whan thise tidynges cam to Gyldris
I deeme / that hyr herte was ful wo
But she / ylike was for evermo
Disposed was / this humble creature
The ordinaunce of ffortune al endure

Absolvynge ever / his lust and his plesance
To whom p^t she was yeven / herte and al
As to hir verray worldly suffisance
But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal
This wyckys Gyseleer hath mi spesial
A lettre / in which he sheweth his entente
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente

To the erl of Pavye / which p^t hadde tho
Wedded his suster / preyde he specially
To bryngen hoom again hise children two
In honurable estaat al openly
But o thyng he hym preyde outrely
That he to no wight though men wolde enquere
Wolde nat telle / whos children p^t they were

But seye the mayden wolde ywedded be
Vn to the wyckye of Calays anon
And as this erl was preyd so dide he
For at day set / he on his wey is gon
Toward Calays / and lordes many oon
In riche array this mayden for to gyde
Hir yonge brother / namynge hym Baude

Maiyes Was toWard hiy maiage
This fiesshe maiyde, ful of gēnes cleene
Hiy bIothey, Which pt. Viy · yeey Was of age
Alwayes eek, ful fiesshy uñ his maneie
And thus uñ gIeet nobIesse, and eyt gIad cheere
Toward Salines, chaffynge hiy iourneij
ffro day to day, they ryden uñ hiy Wey

Explicit quarta pays

Sequitur pars quinta

Among al this, after his olde vsage
This wayfeyde yet, his Wyf to tempte more
To the outtreste preeue, of hiy Wyfage
ffully, to han experience and loore
If that she Were, as stedefast as bifoore
He on a day, uñ open audience
fful boistously hap seyd hiy this sentence

Certes Dame, I hadde ynogh pleasance
To han yoW to myn Wyf for youre goodnesse
as for youre trouthe, and for youre obeisance
Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre richesse
But nowe knowe I, uñ verray soothfastnesse
That uñ gIeet lordshipe, if I Wel avyse
They is gIeet servitute, uñ soudyy Wyse

I may nat doon, as eny goldsmith may
uyy peple, me constreyneth for to take
Another Wyf, and chaūge day by day
And eek the pope, paraūter for to slake
Consenteth it, that day I myscy take
And nedeliche, thus muche I Wol youW seye
uyy nedde Wyf, is comyng by the Weye

Be strong of heyte, and Voyde anon hiy place
And thilke doctrye, that ye hoghsten me
Taak it again, I graunte it of myn grace
Returneth, to youre fadres hous quod she
No man, may alday han prosperite
With euene heyte, and ese yoW tendure
This strook of ffortune, or of auenture

And she answerde again ⁊ patience
My lord quod she, ⁊ woot and wiste alway
How pt bitwixen youre magnificence
And my poure, no wight kan ne may
Maken comparison, it is no nay
I ne heeld me neuer digne ⁊ no mateye
To be youre wyf, no ⁊ ne youre chamberere

And ⁊ in this hous, ther ye me lady maade
The heighe god, take ⁊ for my witnesse
And also wysly, be my soule glaade
⁊ neuer heeld me lady ne maistresse
But humble seruant to youre worthynesse
And euere shal, whil pt my lyf may dure
Abouen erthly creature

That ye so longe of youre benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobleye
Where as ⁊ was, noght worthy bee
That thonke ⁊ god and you, to whom ⁊ preye
Foryelde it you, they is namoore to seye
But to my fader gladly wol ⁊ wende
And with hym dwelle, ⁊ to my lyues ende

Ther ⁊ was fostred of a child ful smal
Til ⁊ be wex my lyf ther wol ⁊ lede
A lewedre clene in body herte and al
For oght ⁊ yaf to you my maydenhede
And am youre trewe wyf it is no drede
God shilde, other a lordes wyf to take
Another man to housbonde, or to make

And of youre newe wyf god of his grace
So graunte you wele and prosperitee
For ⁊ wol gladly, yelden hym my place
In which that ⁊ was busshful wont to bee
For oght it liketh you, my lord quod shee
That whilom weren alwayn myn hestes leste
That ⁊ shal goon ⁊ wol goon ayein youre leste

But ther as ye me profre, of youre grace
As ⁊ first bigan, it is wel in my mynde
It were my werdles clothes no thyng faire
The which to me were litel auayle
O goode god, how gentil and how kynde
Ye semed by youre speche and youre visage
The day that maked was oure mariage

But sooth is seyd, algate I fynde it trewe
ffor in effect it preeued is on me
Lowe is nought wold, as shan pt it is newe
But certes lord, for noon aduertise
Do dyen in the tas, it shal nat bee
That eine, in word or werk I shal repente
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente

Thy lord ye woot that in my fadres place
ye sette me stiere, out of my poure caste
And whilom me clothed of youre grace
To yow biforn the peple in my walkyng
We seyn al baye, wherfore I yow preye
Let me nat lyk a wrecche go by the weye
Remembre yow, myn owene lord so deere
I was youre wif, though I vnworthy weere

Wherfore in gerdon of my maydenhede
Which pt I broghte, and nought again I bere
As toucheth stuf, to yeue me to my mede
But swich a route as I was wont to kepe
That I ther pt may wepe the houre of hepe
That was youre wif, and heer take I my leeue
Of yow myn owene lord, lest I yow greue

The ouok quod he, that thou hast on thy bak
Let it be stille, and bere it forth with thee
But wel vnwethes, thilke word he spak
But wente his wey, for ought and for preyere
Biforn the folk, hir selven stiereth she
And in hir ouok at heed, and foot al baye
To wenden hir fadres hous, forth is she faye

Clerk

The folk hyp folke / kepynge in hyr keye
And ffortune ay they cussen / as they goon
But she flokkepynge kepte hyp eyen weye
Ne in this tyme word ne spak she noon
Hir fadey / that this tidynge herde anoon
Cusseth the day / and tyme that nature
Hoop hym / to been a lymes creature

ffor out of doute / this olde poure man
Was ene / in suspect / of hyr mariage
ffor eke he dwelled / with that it bigan
That whan the lord / fulfild hadde his corage
Hym wolde thynke / it kept a disparage
To his estaat / so lowe for talighte
And wyden hyp / as soone as eny myghte

Agayns his doghtey / hastiliche goth he
ffor he by noyse of folk / knewe hyp comynge
And with hyp olde coote / as it myghte be
He cowed hyp / ful sorkefully kepynge
But on hyp body / myghte he it nat bryngo
ffor pure cas the cloth / and eke moore of age
Wel dayes fele / than at hyp mariage

Thus with hyp fadey / for a certeyn space
Dwelleth this flour / of wyfly patience
That neither by hyp wordes / ne hyp face
Biforn the folk / ne eek in hyp absence
Ne shewed she / that hyp was doon offence
Ne of hyp heighe estaat / no remembraunce
Ne hadde she / as by hyp contenance

No wonder is / for in hyp yerde estaat
Hyp goost was evere / in pleyn humylitee
No tendre mouth / noon heyte delicaat
No pompe / no semblaunt of poraltee
But ful of pacient benygnytee
Discreet and preestlees / ay honurable
And to hyp housbonde / evere meke and stable

Men speke of Job / and moost for his humblesse
As clerkes whan hem list / konne wel endite
Namely of men / but as in sothfastnesse
Though clerkes preise wommen but a lite
Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite
As wommen kan / ne been half so trewe
As wommen been / but it be falle of newe

Of Oxenford ma

Tho Sholongne, is this Eyl of Pavye towe
Of which the fame vp sprang to moore and lesse
And in the peples eyes, alle and some
Was couth eek that a nerre wayfaresse
He ferr hym hoghte, in Grich pouer and prosperite
That nerre was they seyn, with mannes eye
So noble array, in al estatlinesse

The wayes which that shoop and knew al this
Ey that this Eyl was towe, sente his message
For thilke sely poure Emyldre
And she with humble heste, and glad visage
Nat with no semblaun thoght in hyr corage
Cam at his heste, and on hyr knees hyr sette
And reuerently and wisely she hym grette

Madame quod he my Eyl is outrely
This mayden that shal wedded been to me
Forwhy be to morwe as yoreally
As it possible is in myn bone to be
And eek that euery wight in his degree
Have his estaat in sittyng and seruyse
And heigh plesance as I kan best deuyse

I have no wyuen suffisant restayn
The chambres for tarraye in ordinance
After my lust and they for sothe sholde I fayn
That thyn eyen al which maner gouernance
Thorh knowest eek of old al my plesance
Thogh thyn array be basse and yuel biseye
Do thou thy deuoyr at the leeste weye

Forwhat oonly lord that I am glad quod she
To doon your lust but I best alsso
Yow for to serue and plese in my degree
With outen feyntyng and shal euermo
Me neuere for no wele ne no wo
Me shal the gooste expyre myn herte stente
To love yow best and al my trewe entente

And with that word she gan the hous to dighte
And tables for to sette and bedes make
And peynes hyr to doon al that she myghte
Prayyng the chambeleyes for gooddes sake
To hasten hem and faste swepe and shake
And she the mooste seruysable of alle
Hath every chambre arrayed and his halle

Clerk ...

Aboutem vndren / gan this Eyr alighte
That et hym bigghte / these noble children theije
ffor which the people / yan to seen the sighte
Of hys array / so richely biseije
And thamme at eyst / amenges hem they seije
That Valtey was no fool / thogh pt hym leste
To chaunge his weyf / for it was for the beste
ffor she is fayer / as they deemen alle
Than is Custilde / and moore tendre of age
And fayer fruyt / bitwene hem sholde falle
And moore pleasant / for hys heigh lynage
Hir brother eek / so fair was of visage
That hem to seen / the people hath caught plesance
Comendynge now / the kynges gouernance

Auctor ...

Stormy people / vnsad and ever vnstedde
Ay vndiscreet / and chaungynge as a vane
Delityinge ever / in mutabilite that is wedde
ffull lyk the mone / ay wexe ye and wane
Ay fool of clappyng / deeme yuogh a jane
Your doom is falls / your constance yuele preueth
A fool ygeet fool / is he pt on you leeueth

Thus seyden sadde folk / in that Cite
Whan that the people / gazed vp and doun
ffor they were glad / right for the nouelte
To han / a newe lady / of hir toun
Natheles of this made / now mencioun
But to chaunge again / bold me Blesse
And telle hir constance / and hir bisynesse

Thus busy was this wyf / in every thyng
That to the feeste was apertenent
Right nought was she abayst / of hir clothyng
Though it were nyce / and conteek eek to rent
But ert glad cheere / to the yate is she went
With oother folk / to greete the maieste
And after that / doth forth hir bisynesse

With so glad chere / his gestes she receyueth
And so conuenably / euerich in his degree
That no defaute / no man aperceyueth
But ay they wondren / what she myghte be
That in so poure array / was for to see
And couthe / swich honour / and reuerence
And wordes / properly / they preisen hir prudence

¶ of Dyenfoxd ...

In al this meene while / she ne stente
This mayde / and eek hy brother to conforte
With al hy heste / in ful benygne entente
So ferforth / pt no man konde hy pis amende
But atte laste / whan pt they sexdes wende
To sitten doun to mete / he gan to calle
Custance / as she was busy in his halle

¶ Custance quod he / as it were in his pley
Now liketh thee my wyf / and hy beautee :
Certes ferl quod she my lord / for in good fey
A fairer wight q I neuer noon than she
q prey to god / yeue hy prosperitee
and so hope q / that he wol to youre pleasance
Plesance ynogh / in to youre lyues ende

O thing biseke q I you / and warne also
That ye ne prikke with no tormentynge
This tendre mayden / as ye han doon mo
ffor she is fostred / in hy norissynge
more tendrely / and to my supposynge
She konde nat / adversitee endure
As konde a poure fostred creature

¶ And whan this Walter / saugh hy pacience
Hy glad chiere / and no malice at al
And he so ofte / had doon to hym
And she ay sad / and constant as a wal
Continuynge ever hy innocence overal
This sturdy / marquys / gan his herte dresse
To tempten / vp on hy wyfly stedfastnesse

¶ This is ynogh Custance myn quod he
Be now nomoore agast ne yuele apayed
I haue thy feith / and thy benygnytee
As ferl / as euer woman was assayed
In greet estaat · and pouerliche arrayed
Now knowe I goode wyf / thy stedfastnesse
And hym in armes took / and gan hym kesse

¶ And she for wonder / took of it no keep
She hevde nat / what thyng he to hym seyde
She ferde / as she had stert out of a sleep
Til she / out of hy mazednesse abreyde
Custance anon he / by god that for vs deyde
Thou art my wyf / noon other I / I have
Ne neede / as god my soule save

Cum bona fide peccet ac moneo
ne hanc illis aculeis agites nec
altius agitaſti nanq; animos ſi
delicatius nutrita eſt pati quantum
ego vt pecet non valeret

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+

Clerk.

THys is thy doghtey/ which thou hast supposed
To be myn seyf/ that oothey feithfully
Shal be myn hey/ as I haue ay supposed
Thou bare hym/ in thy body tekkely
At Bolongne/ haue I kept hem puely
Take hem agayn/ for nost maystow nat seye
That thou hast lorn/ noon of thy children teeye

And folk/ that oothey seys/ han seyd of me
I kanne hem eel/ pt I haue doon this dede
For no malice/ ne for no cruelte
But for tassaye/ in thee thy Countenaunce
And nat to sleen myn children/ god forbede
But for to kepe hem/ pyuely and stille
Til I thy purpos knowe/ and al thy wille

Whan she this herde/ aswowne doun she falleth
For pitous ioye/ and after hyr mourninge
She bothe hyr yonge children/ vn to hyr calleth
And in hyr armes/ pitously wepinge
Embraceth hem/ and tendrely kissinge
Ful lyk a mooder/ with hyr salte teres
She bathed/ bothe hyr visage and hyr heres

O which a pitous thyng/ it was to se
Hyr swounyng/ and hyr humble voys to here
Gramercy lord/ that thanke I yow quod she
That ye han saued me myn children dere
Now nekke I nede/ to bren dede ryght here
Syth I stonde in youre lore/ and in youre grace
Noght of deeth/ ne shal myn herte race

O tendre/ o dere/ o yonge children myne
Youre woful moodey/ deeth sleeth fastly
That cruel hounde/ or sum foul vermyne
Hath eten yow/ but god of his mercy
And youre benygne fadey/ tendrely
Hath doon yow kept/ and in that same stounde
Al sodeynly/ she sprang adoun to grounde

And in hyr swough/ so sadly holdeth she
Hyr children two/ that as she gan hem embrace
That ech greet aldyng/ and greet difficultee
The children/ from hyr armes they gonne arace
O many a teere/ on many a pitous face
Doun ran/ of hem pt stooden hyr biside
Vnnethe abouten hyr/ myghte they abyde

¶ Of Oyenford

Walter hyp slaketh / and hyp sorge slaketh
Ne useth vp abayssh / from hyp chaunce
And euery wight hyp ioye and feeste maketh
Til she / hath caught agayn hyp countenaunce
Walter hyp sooth / so feithfully plesaunce
That it was dyuine / for to seen the cheere
Bitwixe hem two / were they been met yfeere

¶ Whan ladyes / seen that they hir tyme say
Han taken hyp / and vn to chaumbre gon
And stepen hyp / out of hyp pride away
And vn a cloth of gold / pt bright as soon
With a coroune / of many a riche stoon
Vp on hyp heed they vn to halle hyp brought
And they / she was / honured as hyp ought

Thus hath this pitous day a blissful ende
For eche man and woman doth his might
This day / vn vnto the west to dispende
Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres light
For more solempne / vn eche mannes sight
This feste was / and gretter of costage
Than was / the revel of hyp mariage

¶ Ful many a yeer / vn heigh prosperitee
Lyuen this two / in concord and in reste
And vchely / his doughtey maydes he
Vn to a lord / oen of the worthieste
Of al ytaille / and thamme in pees and reste
His lyues fadey / in his court he kepeth
Til that the coude / out of his body crepeth

His sone / succedeth in his heritage
In reste and pees / after his fadey day
And fortunat / was eek / in mariage
Al putte he nat his lyf in greet assay
This lord is nat / so strong / it is no nay
As it hath been / of olde tymes yoore
And herkneth / what this auctour seith therfoore

¶ This storie is seyd / nat for that lyues sholde
Ffolken hem self / as in hir lyuynge
For it lyth nat in hem / though they wolde
But for that eueryche wight in his degree
Sholde be constaunt / in aduersitee
As was Grisilde / they for pacyent lyueth
This storie / which crist vs alle he viueth

¶ Hanc historiam stilo nunc alto peregisse
Visus fuit no tri ideo vt mattheus
Ipe tepora ad imitanda huius exoris
Paciencia / sue in immutabilis creatu
ra vt legentes ad immutabilem celestem
Gloriam constanciam exortarent / vt ip hec ipo
sito p stitut / hoc pstare de se audeat
quilibet / vt Jacobus ait apls / in
temptatoe erit maledicit ipe inimi
temptat / pbat tri / corpe nos multis
ac grauib flagellis cyceri simus / no
vt animis ipis cruciat / sicuti crimi
natores / ce

For sith a Wouman was so pacient
On to a mortal man / wel more vs ofte
Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent
For greet ese it is / he preeue that he Eroghte
But he / ne tempteth no man / that he boghte
As seith seint Jame / if ye his pistel rede
He precieth folk al day / it is no drede

And suffreth we / as for our exercise
With sharpe scourges of aduersitee
Ful ofte to be bete in sundry wise
Nat for to knowe our wil / for certes he
Er we hym bore / knew our freletee
And for our beste / is al his gouernance
Lat vs therfore / in vertuous suffrance

But o word lordynges herkneth er I go
It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes
In al a toun / Grisildis / thre or two
For if pt they were put / to swiche assayes
Her gold of hem / hath now so bad alayes
With bras / pt though the coyne be fay- at eye
It wold / rather breste atwo than plye

For which heere / for the Wyues loue of Bathe
Whos lyf / and al hir sect god maynteene
In heigh maistrie / and elles were it scathe
I wol with lusty herte / fresh and greene
Seyn yow a song / to glade yow I weene
And lat vs stynte / of ernestful matere
Herkneth my song / that seith in this manere

Lenuoy de Chaucer

Grisilde is ded / and eek hir pacience
And bothe at ones / buryed in Ytaille
For which I crie / in open audience
No wedded man / so hardy be to assaille
His Wyues pacience / in hope to fynde
Grisildis / for in certein he shal faille

O noble Wyues / ful of heigh prudence
Lat noon humylitee / youre tonge naille
Ne let no clerk / haue cause or diligence
To write of yow / a storie of swich mervaille
As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde
Lest Chichemache / yow oppresse in hir entayle

¶ of Oxenforde

ffolketh ekke / that holdeth no silence
But eue[r] ansereth at the countretaille
Weth nat bidaffed for youre ignorence
But shapply / taak on yow the govnaille
Enpuneth wel this lesson in youre wynd
ffor comune profit / oth it may availle

ye archikynes / stondeth at defense
Syn ye be strong as is a gret camaille
Ne suffreth nat / p[ro]uen yow[re] doon offense
And ekendre kynes / feble as in bataille
Weth egle / as is a tygre yond in ynde
Ay clappeth as a mille / yow[re] counsaille

Ne drees hem nat / doth hem no reuerence
ffor thogh thyn housbonde armes be in maille
The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal pce his brest / and eek his aventaille
In ialousie / I rede eek thou him bynde
And thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille

If thou be fair / they folk been in presence
Kepe thou thy visage / and thyn apparaille
If thou be foul / be fle of thy dispence
To gete thee frendes / ay do thy trauaille
Be ay of cheere / as light as leef on linde
And let him care & wepe / and wryng & waille

¶ Whilom the mury wordes of the hoost
Of
Whan worthy clerk / Chaucer endes was his tale
Our hoost seyde / and sworn by goddes bones
He were lewere / than a barel ale
My wyf at hoom / had herd this legende ones
This is a gentil tale / for the nones
As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille
But thyng / p[ro]t wol nat be / let it be stille

¶ Here endeth the tale of the clerk of Oxenforde

The prologe of the wyfchautes tale

Weping and wayling/ care and othey sorke
Kuoke ynogh/ on euen and amorke
Quod the wyfchaut/ and so soon othey mo
That wedde been/ thoke that it be so
ffor wel and woot/ it fareth so with me
I haue a wyf/ the worste that may be
ffor thogh the feend/ to hir yconpled were
She wolde hir owne wil/ and day wel ofte
That shold I yow rehers un special
hir hye malice/ she is a shrewe at al
Ther is a long/ and large difference
Bitwex Grisildis grete pacience .
And of my wyf/ the passing/ cruelte
Were I vnbounden/ also moot I thee
I wolde neuer eft/ comen un the snare
She stedes men/ shrewe un sorke and care
Assaye who so wole/ and he shal fynde
I seye sooth/ by Seint Thomas of ynde
As for the more part/ I dey nat al so
God shilde/ that it sholde so bifalle
A good wyf hoost/ I haue yknowen her
Thise wyntres two/ and more nat pere
And yet I thonke/ he that al his lyue
Wyflees hath been/ thogh pt men wolde hir yeue
Vn to the heste/ ne koude un no manere
Telle so muchel/ sorwe/ as I now heere
Koude telle/ of my wyues cursednesse
Now quod our hoost· wyfchaut so god yow blesse
Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art
Ful heertely/ I pray yow telle vs part/
Gladly quod he/ but of myn owene sore
ffor sory heerte/ I telle may namore

Heere bigynneth the wyfchantes tale

Ful lowe they was ysedd myn lumbardye
A worthy knyght pt bore was of pauye
In which he lyued un grete prosperite
And ofte yeer/ a wyflees man was he
And folwed ay his bodily delyt
On wommen/ ther as was his appetyt

Als doon thise fooles, that been ententyf
And whan that he was passed out of yeer
Were it for hoolynesse, or for dotage
I kan nat seye, but swich a greet corage
Hadde this knyght, to been a wedded man
That day and nyght he dooth al that he kan
Tespien, where he myghte wedded be
Preyinge oure lord, to graunten him pt he
Myghte ones knowe, of thilke blisful lyf
That is betwixe an housbonde and his wyf
And for to lyve, vndey that hooly boond
With which pt first, god man and woman bond
Thoon oothey lyf seyde he, is worth a bene
For wedlok is so esy and so clene
That in this world it is a paradys
Thus seyde this olde knyght, pt was so wys
And certeinly, as sooth, as god is king
To take a wyf, it is a glorious thyng
And namely, whan a man is old and hoor
Whanne is a wyf the fruyt, of his tresor
Whanne olde he take, a yong wyf & a fey
On which, he myghte, engendren hym an hey
And lede his lyf, in ioye and in solas
Whey as thise bachelers, synge alas
Whan that they fynden, any adversitee
In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee
And certeinly, it sit wel to be so
That bachelers, have often peyne and wo
On hotel ground they goon and hotelnesse
They fynde, where as they, be in derkenesse
They lyve but as a brid, or as a beest,
In libertee, and vndey noon arrest
Ther as a wedded man, in his estaat
Lyveth a lyf, blisful and ordinaat
Vndey this yok of mariage ybounde
Wel may his herte, in ioye and blisse habounde
For certes he kan be, so buxom as a wyf
Ther is no thyng, and eek so entendyf
To kepe hym out and hool, as is his make
For wele or wo, she wol hym nat forsake
She nys nat wikked, hym to lete and dyen
Though pt he lye bedredde, til he dyen
And yet sone clerkes seyn, it nys nat so
Of which, he Theofraste is oon of tho
What force though Theofraste liste lye
Ne take no wyf, lyves he for housbondrye
As for to spare in houshold, thy dispence
A trewe servaunt dooth more diligence

Marchant

Thy goos to kepe / than thyn owene wyf
ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf
and if thou be syk / so god me save
Thy dayerye / or a thefte haue
Wol kepe thee bet / than she pt wanteth ay
after thy goos / and hath don many a day
and if thou take a wyf / vn to thyn hoold
ful lightly / maystow ben a cokewold
This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse
Seyeth this man / they goos his bones corse
But take no kepe / of al swich vanytee
Deffie Theofraste / and herke me
A wyf / is goddes yifte verraily
Alle otherege manere yiftes hardily
as londes / rentes / pasture / or commune
Or moebles / alle been yiftes of fortune
That passen / as a shadwe upon a wal
But directely / if pleynly spoke I shal
A wyf wol laste / and vn thyn hous endure
Wel longer than thee list / paraventure
Mariage is / a ful greet sacrement /
He / which pt hath no wyf / I holde hym shent /
He lyveth helpeles / and al desolat /
I speke of folk / vn seculer estaat /
and herke why / I seye nat this for noght
That womman is / for mannes help ywroght /
The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked
and sawgh hym al alone / bely naked
God of his grete goodnesse / seyde than
Lat us now make an help vn to this man
lyk to hym self / and thanne he made hym Eve
Here may ye se / and here by may ye preve
That wyf is mannes help / and his confort /
his paradys terrestre / and his disport /
So buxom / and so pleyvnge is she
Ther moste nedes / love vn touche
Of flesshly they been / and o flesh as I gesse
hath but oon herte / in wele and in destresse
A wyf / a seinte mary benedicite
How myghte a man / han any adversitee
That hath a wyf / certes I can nat seye
The blisse / which pt is bitwixe hem tweye
Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke
If he be povre / she helpeth hym to swynke
She kepeth his good / and wasteth neyther a deel
al that hym liketh / hym liketh ek wel
She seith nat onys nay / whan he seith ye
Do this seith he / al redy wil she seith she

Uxor est diligenda ꝑ dom̃ dei est / Hec filius sirach / Domꝰ ꝑuidit sanctꝫ ꝓuidus / ꝑdomino ducit ꝙ uir uxor bona sel ꝓuidens

Bona fortuna

Adiutoriū ei adiutoriū ꝑ ipsū ita costa ꝑ corpore ade fecit dñs ꝑ ipsū / Hec relinquet homo patrem ꝑ matrem ꝑ adherebit ꝑ et erunt duo in carne una

Marchaunt ~

O blessid ordre of Cardoll freres
Thou art so wurthy / and eek so vertuous
And so conuenable / and appreued eek /
That euery man / pt hath hym knoweth a leek /
Vp on his bare knees / oughte al his lif /
Thanken his god / pt hym hath sent a wif /
Or elles preye to god / hym for to sende
A wif / to laste / vn to his lyues ende
For thanne his lif / is ese wt outen moleste
He may nat be deceyued as I gesse
So pt he werke / after / his wyues reede
Lo holde pt Jacob / as thise clerkes reede
By good counseil / of his moodey Rebekke
Doon the kydes skyn / aboute his nekke
Thurgh which / his fadres benysoun he wan
Lo Judith / as the storie eek telle kan
By hir counseil / she gooddes peple kepte
And slowe hym Olofernus / whil he slepte
Lo Abigayl / by good counseil / how she
Knew hir housbonde Nabal / whan pt he
Sholde han be slayn / and loke after also
By good counseil / deliuered out of wo
The peple of god / and made hym wayshee
Of assiege / enhaunced for to be
Thy wys no thyng / ne werke outrageously
As seith Seneck / a-boute an humble wyf
Suffre thy wyues tonge / as Catoun bit
She shal comaunde / and thou shalt suffren it
And yet she wole obeye of curteisye
A wif / is kepere / of thyn housholdrye
Wel may the syke man / bewaille & wepe
There as they nys no wif / the hous to kepe
I warne thee / if wisely / thou wolt wyue
Loue wel thy wif / as crist loued his chirche
If thou louest thy self / thou louest thy wif
For no man hateth his flesh / but in his lif /
He fostreth it / and therfore bidde I thee
Cherisse thy wif / or thou shalt nevere thee
Housbonde and wif / what shal so men rede or pleye
Of wedlok folk / holden the olde weye
They been so knyt / they may noon hayne bityde
And namely vpon the wyues syde
For which this Jannuarie / of whom I tolde
Considered hath / with his sadde olde
The lusty life / the vertuous quiete
That is in mariage hony sweete
And for his frendes / on a day he sente
To tellen hem the effect / of his entente

Jacob & consilium matris sue Rebecce &c

Judith de manibz Olofernis &c

Abigayl & sui boni consilii sui mali Nabal ab ira Dauid liberant

Esther & Iudeos & boni consilii cum malo Aman in regno Assueri

Seneca Sicut michil est benigna coniuge vita michil crudelius est infesta muliere

Catto Vxoris iniquam si fugis est ferre memento

Bona mulier fidelis custos est & bona donum

Viri diligite uxores vras sicut xps dilexit ecclam &c

Viri debent diligere uxores suas et uxores suos viri diligit seipsum Nemo unquam carnem suam odio habuit set nutrit & fouet eam et postea Viri sic debent diligere uxores sicut xps ecclam diligit

Wyf of Bathe

Wyth face sad his tale he hath hem told
The cause fieendes I am hoor and old
And almoost god woot on my pittes brynke
Vp on the sooth / Ouerthat moste I thynke
I haue myn body folily despended
Blessed be god / that it shal been amended
For I shal be / certeyn a wedded man
And that anoon / in al the haste I kan
Vn to som wyght / fair / and tendre of age
I prey yoow shapeth for my mariage
Al sodeynly / for I shal nat abyde
And I shal fonde / tespien on my syde
To whom / I may be wedded hastily
But for as muche / as ye been wys thanne I
ye shullen rather / wyth a thyng espyen
Than I / and chese me best skye to allyen
But o thyng kanne I yoow / my fieendes deere
I shal noon oold wyf han / in no manere
She shal nat passe / twenty yeer certayn
Olde fissh and yong flesh / wolde I haue fayn
Wet is quod he / a pyk than a pykerel
And bet than olde boef is the tendre veel
I shal no woman / thritty yeer of age
It is but beneystraw and greet forage
And eek thise olde wydwes / god it woot
They konne / so muchel craft on Wades boot
So muchel broken hamm / than pt hem leste
That pt hem wolde I neue lyve in reste
For sondry scoles / maken subtile clerkis
Woman of many scoles / half a clerk is
But certeynly / a yong thyng / may men gye
Right as men may / warm wex wt handes plye
Wherfor I yow / prey yoow pleynly in a clause
I shal noon oold wyf han / for this cause
For if so were / pt I hadde swich myschance
That I in hyr / me sholde han no plesance
Than sholde I lede my lyf in auoutrye
And streight vnto the deuel whan I dye
Ne children sholde I none vp on hyr geten
Yet were me leuer / pt houndes had me eten
Than pt myn heritage sholde falle
In straunge hand / and this I telle yoow alle
I dote nat / I woot the cause why:
Wel sholde he / and forthermoore woot I
Who spekith / many a man of mariage
That woot nat noon of it / than woot my page
For whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf
If he may nat lyuen chaast his lyf

Wyf of Bathes Prologue

Take kyme a wyf with gret deuocion
By cause of lewednesse and of symplenesse
To wedden hire / and whan that he hath don
And that no man hath power to ne may
Forbede it / by the lawes nowe in fay
Than may he make his pleyn vnlawful wyf
Whom he wol have / at alle hire lymes lyf
Ne noon of his neighebores may hire withsay
But lyue in chastite both night and day
As clene as is a mayde bothe in thought
In werke / and eke in word / as moste ought
A wyf that is vnto a man ywedded
Now wolde I axe why that men vnthedded
Sholde alle hire lyf / from vertue sette aside
And folwe hire wyl / for ought that may betide
Lo how that Jacob / as these clerkes rede
By good conseil / and by his modres rede
Right thurgh the skyn / of the kydes two
The whiche he took / and couered hire therto
Gat fayre / and wel / his fadres benyson
For which his brother Esau wolde han slayn
And lo Rebekke / that was hire wyues name
By good conseil / made hire sone to come
To gete his fadres benyson in this wyse
And lo Judith / as holy writ dooth deuyse
By good conseil / right thus vnto hire knyght
Whan that hire thought / he wolde haue al to nyght
Whan Holofernes / dronken lay in bed
That with a swerd / of his heed hire sholde smyte
And lo Hester / by good conseil and lore
Deliuered out / of sorwe the Jewes fre
That Mardochee / was hight / as clerkes rede
For which in stories / his name is rad
Lo Abygayl / by good conseil how she
Recouered / Dauid / and saued his degree
And conseilled hire husbonde / shortly to take
Whan vpon his beard / shauen was and shake
And lo / what seith / Ysaac / the gode man
Wyues / wirketh by conseil / if ye kan
Rebekke / eke / that wyse was and hende
Hire conseil was / my sone / as I the wende
Do after the wordes / of my fadres rede
Lo / which a man / was Jacob / as I rede
That lordship hadde / of his modres conseil
And he was yong / er he it had counseil
And forthermore / lo this is ful notable
A wyf / that hath / an housbonde / vnmeritable
Hire conseil may / make him / wyse and sage
And voyden him / of folyes / olde and rage
And put him / in the weye / of honestee
And teche him / pacience / and humylitee
Wyues conseil / broughte hem / first to hire make
Wyues conseil / made hem / hire foo forsake
Wyues conseil / made hem / hire sones save
Whan that the mayde / hire children / forth gan have
Wyues conseil / made hem / hire lordes obeye
Conseil of wyues / is ful of greet profyte
Som folk / han wyues / whiche that hem counseil nought
Thanne wol they / speke / of hem / bothe foule and faught
And caste / hire wordes / vp / in reprehencions
And seye / hire conseil / is ful of abusions
Bycause / that they / hire wyues / wolde chastise
Som folk / han wyues / whiche that be ful wyse
And loue / hire honour / and hire gode name
And deme / alle thyng / by discrecioun
And folwe / alwey / hire conseil / of resoun
And namely / of hem / to whom / god yaf grace
To han / wyues / whiche that / ben of good solace
And vertuous / and wel / conditioned eke
And somme / ther be / that / ben vnto hire eke
Ful ofte / tyme / a labour / and a penaunce
But wyse folk / wol / bere / hire / with plesaunce
For wyse folk / wol / bere / hire / with plesaunce
For wyse folk / wol / bere / hire / with plesaunce
For

Wouten lordes / of ful heigh estaat
yet hadde I neue / but noon of hem bbaat
I neueye hem contynaûce trekkely
I woot wel / that my lord kan moore than I
What that he seith / I holde it fermne and stable
I seye the same / or elles thyng semblable
A ful greet fool / is any counsellour
That sueth any lord / of heigh honour
That day pssinue / or elles thenken it
That his counseil / sholde passe his lordes wit
Nay / lordes been no fooles by my fay
ye han youre owne / seyde he to day
So heigh sentence / so holily and wel
That I consente / and confermne eny deel
youre lordes alle / and youre opinioun
By god / they wys no man / in al this toun
Wyn ytaille / that kouthe bet han sayd
Thus halt hym / of this counseil ful wel apayd
And therkely / it is an heigh corage
Of any man / that stapen is in age
To take a yong wyf / by my fader kyn
youre heyte sangeth / on a wely pyn
Seeth nowe in this matiere / right as yow leste
For finally / I holde it for the beste
Justinus / Justinus / pt ay stille sat and heelde
Right in this ese / he to Placebo answeelde
Now brother myn / be patient I preye
Syn ye han seyd / and heerneth what I seye
Seneck among hise otheye lordes wyse
Seith / pt a man oghte hym right wel avyse
To whom he yeueth his lond or his catel
And syn I oghte / avyse me right wel
To whom I yeue my good / algey slo me
Wel muchel moore I oghte avysed be
To whom I yeue my body / for algey
I trowe yow wel / it is no childes pley
To take a wyf / with outen avysement
Wel moste enquere / this is myn assent
Wheither she be riche / or poure / or noblesse
Or proud / or elles oothey vices a shrewe
A chidestere / or wastour of thy good
Or lyche / or poore / or elles mannyssh wood
Al be it so / that no man fynden shal
Noon in this erthe / that trotteth hool in al
Ne man ne beest / but it as men kouthe devyse
But nathelees / it oghte ynough suffise
With any wyf / if so be eye that she hadde
Two goode thewes / than hire vices badde

Thus al this ayeth leyser for tenpyse
ffor gos it Coot / I haue Cept many a teeye
fful pryuely / ofyn I haue has a Cyf
Dreyse Cho so Cole / a Cedded mannes lyf
Ceytem I fynde nn it / but cost and caye
And observances / of alle slisses baye
And yet gos Coot / my neighebores aboute
And namely / of Couren many a poute
Seyn pt I haue / the mooste stedefast Cyf
And eek the mekeste oon / that beyeth lyf
But I Coot best / Chey Cyngeth me my osho
Ye mocke for me / nyght as yoos liketh so
Anyseth yoos / ye been a man of age
Hoos that ye cutten / nn to manage
And namely / with a yong Cyf / and a fair
Cy hym pt made Catey / eythe / and ayr
The yongeste man / pt is nn al this yonte
Is busy ynough / to bryngen it aboute
To haue his Cyf allone / trusteth me
Ye shul natt plesen hym / fully yeres thre
This is to seyn / to doon hym ful plesance
A Cyf ayeth / ful many an observance
I prey yoos / pt ye be natt ynelo atrayd
Del quod this Damyane / and haftoos ystayd
Stryke for thy Deneck / and for thy prouendes
I counte natt / a panyer ful of hendes
Of stole fraues / Cysey men thau thoos
As thou hast seyd / assenteden nyght noos
To my purpos / Placebo / what seye ye?
I seye / it is a cursed man quod he
That letteth matrimoigne certeyn
And with that word / they ryden forth hir weyn
And been assentes / fully pt he sholde
Ye Cedded / Chanue hym lyke and Chey he Colde
Neigh fantastye / and curious busynesse
ffro day to day gan nn the soule mysse
Of Damyane / aboute his mariage
Many fair shape / and many a fair visage
Chey passeth through his heyte / nyght by nyght
As Cho so tooke a mirour polissed bryght
And sette it nn a comune market place
Chanue sholde he se / ful many a figure pace
By his mynoun / and nn the same Cyse
Can Damyane / with his thoght deuyse
Of maydens / Chiche pt Cheelden hym best
He Ciste natt / Chey pt he nyghte abyde
ffor if pt oon / haue beaute / nn hir face
Another stant so / nn the peples grace

ffor hys sadnesse and hys benignytee
That of the peple gretteſt voyde hath sho
And done kepe pcho and hasden badde name
But nathelees bitwixe ernest and game
He atte laste apoynted hym on soon
And leet alle othere from his heste goon
And chees hym of his owene auctoritee
ffor love is blynd alday and may nat see
And whan that he was in his bed ybrought
He pvyed in his heste and in his thought
Hys fresshe beautee and hys age tendre
Hys myddel stual hys armes longe and sklendre
Hys gise gouvnance hys gentillesse
Hys stedfastly berynge and hys sadnesse
And whan that he on hys was condescended
Hym thoughte his choyse myghte nat ben amended
ffor whan pt he hym self concluded hadde
Hym thoughte ech other mannes wit so badde
That unpossible it semed to replye
Agayn his choyse this was his fantasye
His freendes sente he to at his instance
And preyed hem to doon hym that plesance
That hastily they wolden to hym come
He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some
Nedeth nat more for hym to go ne ryde
He was apoynted they he sholde abyde
Placebo cam and eek his freendes sone
And aldervirst he bad hem alle a boone
That noon of hem none argumente make
Agayn the purpos which pt he hath take
Which purpos was plesant to god seyde he
And verray ground of his prosperitee
He seyde they was a mayden in the toun
Which pt of beautee hadde grete renoun
Al were it so she were of smal degree
Suffiseth hym hir yowthe and hir beautee
Which maydne he seyde he wolde han to wyf
To lede in ese and hoolynesse his lyf
And thanked god pt he myghte han hys al
That no wight his blisse parten shal
And prayde hem to labowre in this nede
And shapen pt he faille nat to spede
ffor thanne he seyde his spirit was at ese
Thanne is quod he no thyng may me displese
Save o thyng pryketh in my conscience
The which I wol reherce in youre presence
I have quod he herd seyd ful yoore ago
They may no man han parfite blisses two

Marchant. w

This is to seye, un-to the ende un-to heuene
ffor though he kepe hym fro the synnes seuene
And eek from euery braunche of thilke tree
yet is ther so parfit felicitee
And so greet ese, and lust in mariage
That euery day am agast, now in myn age
That I shal lede now so myrie a lyf
So delicat, with-outen ire and stryf
That I shal haue myn heuene in-to-the heye
ffor with pt wyf my heuene is bogt so deye
With tribulacion, and greet penance
How shold I thanne, pt lyne in swich plesance
As alle wedded men, doon pt hir wyues
Come to the blisse, ther crist eche on lyue yf
This is myn dreede, and ye my brethren keye
assoilleth me this questioun I preye

Iustinus. Which pt hates his folye
Answerde anon right in his rapelye
And for he wolde, his longe tale abregge
he wolde noon auctoritee allegge
But seyde oure, so they be noon obstacle
Other than this, god of his hygh myracle
And of his hygh mercy, may so for yow swiche
That er ye haue youre right of bodily chiche
ye may repente, of wedded mannes lyf
In which ye seyn, they is no ire ne stryf
And elles god forbede, but he sente
A wedded man, hym grace to repente
Wel ofte, rather than a sengle man
And therfore sire, the beste rede I can
Distreye yow nogt, but haue in youre memorie
Paunter, ofte may be youre purgatorie
Ofte may be goddes meene, and godes whippe
Thanne shal youre soule, vp to heuene skippe
Swifter than dooth an arwe, out of the bowe
I hope to god, hyer after shul ye knowe
That they nys, no so greet felicitee
In mariage, ne neuere mo shal bee
That yow shal lette, of youre saluacion
So that ye vse, as skile is and reson
The lustes of youre wyf attemprely
And pt ye plese hym nat to outrely
And pt ye kepe yow eek from oother synne
My tale is doon, for my wit is thynne
Beth nat agast, hyer of, my brother weye
But lat vs saillen, out of this mateere
The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde
Of mariage, which ye haue on honde

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Rectaues hath fiu Cel in litel space
ffaieth noll Cel gos haue yolle in his grce
And Cith this Cepe / this giftyn and his brother
Han take hy leue / and ech of hem of oothey
ffor Chan they gangh that it moste be
They Cloghten so by ely and Cys thetor
That she this mayden Chith pt tyaynus highte
As haftily as euere that she myghte
Shal Cedde be vn to this Tamaie
Tholde it Cere to longe yolle to taie
If I yolle tolde / of eueyy dyt and lond
By Chich / pt she Cas fetted in his lond
Or for to heriien / of hy riche array
But finally yconuen is the say
That to the chyche / bothe be they Cent
ffor to receyue the hooly sacrement
ffor this couth the preest / & stole aboute his nekke
And bas hym be lyk to Dayna and Rebekke
In Cysdom and in thouthe of maiage
And seyde hy orysons / as is vsage
And chouchseth hem / and bad god Sholde hem blesse
And made al sikey ynogh Cith hoolynesse
Thus been they Cedded Cith solempnitee
And at the feeste / sitteth he and she
Cith other Certhy folk vpon the deys
Al ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys
And ful of instrumentz and of vitaille
The mooste deyntenous / of al ytaille
Biforn hem / stooden instrumentz of Cich comm
That orpheus / ne of Thebes Amphion
Ete maden nede / Cich a melodye
At dyy couys / thamme cam loud ryynstyalye
That nede tromped Joab for to heere
For he Theodomas / yet half so cheere
At Thebes Chan the Ortee Cas in doute
Bacus / the Cyn hem thynketh al aboute
And Uenus / laughseth vpon euery knight
For Jamaye / Cas become hy knyght
And Colde bothe / assayen his corage
In libeytee / and eek in maiage
And Cet hym fyr bifornen / in hy hand aboute
Dauncetth / biforn the bryde and al the route
And certenly / I dar right Cel seyn this
Amenens / that god of Cedding is
Amongh neede his lyf / so myyne a Cedded man
Hoold thou thy pees / thou poete wystestu
That Cryteth vs / that ilke Cedding mynde
Of hys philologie / and hym mystynde

Nus of the songes that the muses songe
To shal us bothe thyn penne and eek thy tonge
ffor to discryuen of this mariage
Than tendre youthe hath hedes stoupyng age
Dsey is wich myrthe pt it may nat be hyden
Assayeth it youre self thamme may ye witen
If that I lye or noon nu this matiere
Januarius that olde that so benygne a chiere
Hyr to biholde it semes fayrye
Queene Ester looked nedie pt wich an eye
On assuer so meke a look hath she
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee
But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of may
ffulfild of alle beautee and plesance
This Januarie is ravysshed in a trance
At ecry tyme he looked on hir face
But in his herte he gan hire to manace
That he that nyght in armes wolde hir streyne
Harder than ecre Paris dide Heleyne
But natheles yet hadde he greet pitee
That thilke nyght offenden hir moste he
And thoughte allas o tendre creature
Wolde wolde god ye myghte wel endure
Al my corage it is so sharp and keene
I am agast ye shul it nat susteene
But god forbede that I dide al my myght
Wolde wolde god pt it were comen nyght
And that the nyght wolde lasten evermo
I wolde that al this peple were ago
And finally he dooth al his labour
As he best myghte savynge his honour
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse
The tyme cam that reson was to ryse
And after that men dauncen and drynken faste
And spices al aboute the hous they caste
And ful of ioye and blisse is every man
Al but a squyer highte Damyan
Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day
He was so ravysshed on his lady may
That for the day peyne he was nyh wood
Almoost he swelte and swowned ther he stood
So sore hath venus hurt hym pt his chere
As pt she bar it daunsynge in his bere
And to his bed he wente hym hastily
Amorwe of hym at this tyme speke
But they lete hym slepe ynogh and pleyne
Til fresshe may wol peinten on his peyne

Ialous fyr / that in the bestnalle bredeth
O famulier foo / that his seruyce bedeth
O seruant thaytory / falle soonly hecke
lyk to the nadre / in bosom sly vntrecke
Dos shilde vs alle / from youre aqueyntance
O Januarie / spouken in plesance
In maryage / se hath thy Damyan
Thyn owene squyer / and thy boren man
Entendeth / for to do thee vileynye
God graunte thee / thyn soonly fo testyne
ffer in this Forld / nyr Forso - pestilence
Than soonly foo / alday in thy presence
Thoumes hath the onne / his ayr suyne
Fro lengey / may the body of hym sowne
On thorisonte / as in that latitude
Right Et his mantel pt is Reysans nede
Han ouersprede the hemysperie aboute
ffer Which / departes is / this lusty route
ffro Januarie / With thank on eucry syde
Hoom to hys hous / lustily they ryde
Where as they soon hir thynges / as hem leste
and Whan they syn hir tyme / goon to reste
Soone after that / this hastif Januarie
Wolde go to bedde / he Wolde no lengey tarie
he dryuyeth ypocras / clarree and vernage
Of spyces hoote / to encreessen his corage
and many a letuarie / hath he ful fyn
Rychc as the gyrdle / daun Constantyn
hath Eyten / in his book Et toforn
To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschyn
and to hise priee fleeces / thus seyde he
ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be
Let voyden al this hous / in curteys wyse
and they han doon / right as he wol deuyse
Eyen dryuen / and the thaueys dalle anon
The bryde / Was brought a bedde / as stille as stoon
and Whan the bed / Was With the preest yblessed
Out of the chambre / hath euery Wight hym dressed
and Januarie / hath faste in armes take
his fresshe may / his comfort he make
he kusseth hir / he kusseth hir ful ofte
With thilke bristles / of his berd vnsofte
lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh / sharp as breye
ffor he Was shaue al newe / in his manere
he nibbeth hir / aboute hir tendre face
and seyde thus / allas I moot trespace
To yow my spouse / and yow greetly offende
Er tyme come / pt I wil doun descende

But natheles / consydereth this quod he
They wys no creatur / what so ende he be
That may bothe ryde wel and fastily
This shal be doon at leyser yfitly
It is no force / how longe pt we pleye
In tweke wedlok / wedded be we treye
And blessed be the yok pt we been inne
ffor in stryves / we mowe no ioye winne
A man / may no wyfe fynde pt his wyf
Wol hunte hym selven / pt his owene knyf
ffor we han leve / to pleye vs by the lawe
Thus laboureth he / til pt the day gan dawe
And thanne he taketh a sop / in hym clarree
And vp right in his bed / thanne sitteth he
And after that / he song ful loude and cleere
And fifte his throte / and made Cantoclere cheere
He was al coltissh / ful of ragerye
And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye
The colle eyen / aboute his nekke shaketh
Whil pt he song / so chaunteth he and craketh
But god woot / what pt may thoughte in hy-herte
Whan he hym saugh / vp sittynge in his sherte
In his nyght cappe / and pt his nekke lene
He preyseth nat his pleyynge worth a bene
Thanne sayde he thus / my leefe col I take
Now day is come / I may no lenger wake
And down he leyde his feet / and crew ful proudly
And after him / his wyves twelve answerden him
As manye / and with hem gan they synge
Me hunte hym selven / pt his owene knyf
ffor he han leve / to pleye vs by the lawe
Thus laboureth he / til pt the day gan dawe
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And down he leyde his feet / and crew ful proudly
And after him / his wyves twelve answerden him
As manye / and with hem gan they synge
And after wash / pt he hath his visage
Heeld his chaumbre / vn to the fourthe day
As vsage is / of wyues / for the beste
ffor euery labour / som tyme moot han reste
Or elles / longe may he nat endure
This is to seyn / no lyues creature
Be it of fysshe / or bryd / or beest / or man
Now col I speke / of knyght Damyan
That langwisseth for loue / as ye shul heere
Therfore / I speke to hym in this manere
I seye / o secly Damyan allas
Ande scheye to my Sowereyne as in this cas
How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe may
Telle thy wo / the hole aldai seye may
Eek if thou speke / she wol thy wo bireye
God be thyn helpe / I kan no bettre seye
This ilke Damyan / in verrais fyr
So brenneth that he dyeth for desyr
ffor which he pitte his lyf in auenture
No lenger wyghte he / in this wise endure

Marchaunts tale

But pleyly a penney gan he borke
And in a lettre schoot he al his borke
In maneye of a compleynt or a lay
Un to his fayre fresshe lady way
And in a purs of syle heng on his sheste
He hath it put and leyde it at his heste
The moone that at noon was thilke day
That Januarie hath wedded fresshe May
In tokn of pitee was in to cancre glyden
So longe hath Mayus in his chabre byden
As custume is un to thise nobles alle
A bryde shal nat eten in the halle
Til dayes foure or .v. dayes atte leeste
Ypassed been thanne lat hym go to feeste
The fourthe day complet fro noon to noon
That ye the seigle masse was ydon
In halle sit this Januarie and May
As fresh as is the brighte sonnes day
And so befel how that this goode man
Remembred hym upon this Dampyan
And seide sothly Januarie how may this be
That Dampyan entendeth nat to me
Is he ay sik or how may this bityde
His squyer cheche that stooden ther bisyde
Excused hym by cause of his sikenesse
Which lettes hym to doon his busynesse
Noon other cause myghte make hym tarye
That me forthynketh quod this Januarie
He is a gentil squyer by my trouthe
If that he deyde it were harm and routhe
He is as wys discreet and as secree
As any man I woot of his degree
And therto manly and eek servysable
And for to been a thrifty man right able
But after mete as soone as evere I may
I wol my self visite hym and eek May
To doon hym al the confort that I kan
And for that woord hym blesse every man
Thatt of his bountee and his gentillesse
He wolde so conforten in sikenesse
His squyer for it was a gentil deede
Thanne quod this Januarie take good heede
At after noon ye thee ye route heven alle
That ye han been in chambre out of this halle
That alle ye go to this Dampyan
Doth hym disport he is a gentil man
And telleth hym that I wol hym visite
Have I no thyng but restes me alite

Dus sprede ȳolk faste for cole abȳde
Til that ȳe slepe faste bȳ mȳ syde
And ẽt that tyme he gan to hym to calle
A squyer that was marchal of his halle
And tolde hym etc ȳn thȳnges that he wolde
This flesshe may hath streyght hȳ wey ȳholde
With alle hȳ wommen vn to Dannyan
Down bȳ his beddes syde sit she than
Confortynge hym as goodly as she may
This Dannyan that his tyme se sȳ
Yn sechee wise his pus and eek his bille
In which pt he ȳkentyn hadde his wille
Hath put vñ to hȳ hand with outen more
Save pt she taketh counsey depe and sore
And softely to hȳ nyght thus seyde he
Wyfe ȳe nat displese me
For Ihū sake if that this thyng be ȳs
This pus hath she with hȳ besdon hys
And seyde hȳ wey ȳe gete namore of me
But vn to Januarye ȳcomen is she
That on his beddes syde sit ful softe
And taketh hȳ and kyssyth hȳ ful ofte
And seyde hym dun to slepe and that anon
She feyned hȳ as that she moste gon
Ther as ȳe wost pt euery wyght most nede
And whan she of this bille hath taken hede
She rente it al to clowtes atte laste
And vn the pryvee softely it caste
So studieth nost but fayre flesshe may
Adown bȳ olde Januarye she lay
That slep til pt the cough hath hym awaked
Anon he preyde hȳ strepen hȳ al naked
He wolde of hȳ she sholde han som plesance
He sayde hȳ clothes dede hym out of balance
And she obeyeth be hȳ lief or loth
But lest ȳe thous folk be wroth with me
Now that he wyghte I say nat to yow telle
Or elles pt hȳ thoughte it paradys or helle
But here I lete hem werken vñ hȳ wyle
Til euensong rong and pt they moste abȳde
Here it bȳ destynee or bȳ aventure
Here it bȳ influence or bȳ nature
Or constellacioun that in swich estat
The heuene stood that tyme fortunat
Was for to putte a bille of venus werkes
For alle thyng hath tyme as seyn thise clerkes
To any wight for to gete hȳ love
I can nat seye but gete hem above

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That thynketh that noon dette is thonselees
he deme of al for I shole holde my pees
But sooth is this hoost that this fleisshe ayay
hath take shrich mysprision that day
ffor pitee of this syke Damyan
That flow hyr heste she ne dyde han
the remembrance for to doon hym ese
Certeyn thoghte she shoulde this thyng displese
I sette noght for heele I hym assaye
To lowe hym best of any creature
Though he amoore hadde than his deyte
So pitee renneth soone in gentil heyte
Heere may ye se hoow excellent franchise
In wommen is whan they hem myghte avyse
Som tyraunt is as they be many oon
That hath an heyte as hard as any stoon
Which sholde han sat hym stoxen in the place
Wel rather than han graunted hym hyr grace
And hem rejoysen in hyr owene myscheef
And recke nat to been an homycide
This gentil may fulfilled of pitee
Right of hyr hand a lettre made she
In which she graunteth hym hyr day to gee
They taketh noght oonly but day and place
They pt she myghte unto his lust suffise
ffor it shal be right as he hir devyse
And whan she raught hym time upon a day
To visite this Damyan goth may
And sotilly this lyf doun she threste
Under his pilwe rede it if hym leste
She taketh hym by the hand and halde hym straste
So secrely that no wight of it wiste
And bad hym been al hool and forth she weente
To Januarie whan pt he for hym wente
Cometh Damyan the neyte noothe
And al passed was his sikneesse and his soothe
He kembeth hym he pleyneth hym and pyketh
he dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh
And eek to Januarie he gooth as looke
As doth a dogge for the bone
He is so plesant unto every man
ffor craft is al whoso it can
That every wight is fayn to speke hym good
And fully in his lady grace he stood
Thus leef I Damyan about his nede
And unto mayes tale forth I shal procede
Thre clerkes woldon that feliatee
Stant in delit and they for to stodye he

Thaychaint ~

This noble Jamaye, with al his myght
In honeste dyse, as longeth to a knyght
Shoop hym to lyve, ful delicyously
His housynge, his array, as honestly
To his degree, was makes as a kynges
Amonges other, of hise houeste thynges
He made a gardyn, walles al with stoon
So fayr a gardyn, Goot q nowher noon
ffer out of doute, I verrayly suppose
That he, pt Depoot the pomaunce of the Rose
Ne conde of it, the beautee Del deuyse
Ne Priapus, ne myghte nat suffise
Though he be god of gardynes, for to telle
The beautee of the gardyn, and the welle
That stood vndey a laurer, alkey grene
fful ofte tyme he Pluto and his queene
Proserpina, and al hyr fayye
Disporten hem, and maken melodye
Aboute that welle, and daunced as men tolde
This noble knyght, this Jamaye the olde
Wich beautee hath in it to walke and pleye
That he wol no knight suffren bere the keye
Saue he hym self, for of the smale kyket
He bar alkey, of siluer a clyket
With which, whan pt hym lefte he it vnshette
And whan he wolde, paye his self hym sette
In comey wise, thidey wolde he go
And myn his self, and no knight but they two
And they, whiche pt kepe nat doon ableve
He in the gardyn, ypounes hem and dryve
And in this kyse, many a mury day
Lyued this Jamaye, and fleshly may
But certaynly Joye, may nat alkey dure
To Jamaye, ne to no creature

Cordeyn hap, o thou fortune instable
Lyk to the scorpion, so deceyuable
That flateryest er thym hees, whan thou wolt synge
Thy tayl is deeth, thrugh thym enuenymynge
O brotil Joye, o sweete venym queynte
O monstre, that so subtilly kanst peynte
Thy yiftes, vnder hewe of stedefastnesse
That thou deceyuest, bothe more and lesse
Thy hastock Jamaye, this deceyued
That hadest thym, for thy ful freend perceyued
And now thou hast, byraft, hym bothe hise eyen
ffer sorwe of whiche, desyreth he to dyen

Author ~

Allas, this noble Jamaye-free
Amyddes his lust, and his prosperitee

Marchaunt.

Is Coyen blynd / and that al ordeynly
He Cheryeth and he Cayleth pitously
And they Crth al / the fyr of Jalousie
Left pt his Cyf / Cholde falle in ordich folye
To shewe his herte / that he Colde fayn
That oon man / bothe shyn & shr has slayn
ffor nerthey after his deeth / nor in his lyf
Ne Colde he / pt she eyen loue ne Cyf
But ende lyue as Cydde in clothes blake
Coul as the turtle / pt lost hath hyr make
But atte laste / after a monthe or threye
His sorwe gan aswage / sooth to seye
ffor Cthan he Ciste / it may noon oothers be
He patiently / took his auenture
Came out of doute / he may nat forgoon
That he was Jalous / ek moore in oon
Cheich Jalousye / it Cas so outrageous
That nerthey in halle / nyn noon oothers hous
Cr yn noon oothers place / ne vthe no
He nolde suffre hyr / for to ryde or go
But if pt he / had hond on hyr alday
ffor Cheich ful ofte / Ceepeth fle she may
That loueth Damyan / so denygnely
That she moot / outhey dyen ordeynly
Or elles / she moot han hym as hyr leste
She Cayteth / Cthan hyr leste Colde bieste
Upon that oothey cyde Damyan
Bicomen is / the sorkefulleste man
That ende Cas / for nerthey nyght ne day
Cr myghte he speke a Cord to fle she may
As to his purpos / of no Cheich mattere
But if that Jalousie / moste it heere
That hadde an hand / vp on hyr ende moo
But nathelees / by Cryting to and fro
And pitee seynes / Criste he Cheet she meente
And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
Jalousie / Cheet myghte it thee auaille
Thogh thou myghtest se / as fey as Argus Caille
ffor as good is / blynd deceyued be
As to be deceyued / Cthan a man may se
Lo Argus / Cheich pt hadde / an hondred eyen
ffor al pt ende / he koude poure or pryen
yet Cas he blent / and god woot so been moo
That Cenen Cisely / that it be nat so
Passe ouer is an ese / I seye namoore
This fle she may / pt I spak of so yoore
In Cham Cey / hath enprinted the chyket
That Jalousie bar- / of the smale Cyket

Auctor

By Crist / nu to his gardyn ofte he wente
And Damyan / that kuew al hys entente
The cliket counterfeted prymely
They nys nanoȝe to seye / but hastily
Com knoudey / by this cliket schal bityde
Such ye schul seen / if ye kole abyde
O noble Ouyde / ful ooth seystou god Coot /
What sleighte is it / thogh it be long and hoot /
That he nyl fynde it out / nu Com maneye
By Pyramus / and Tesbee / may men seye
Thogh they weren kept ful longe streite on al
They been accorded / postnynge thurgh a wal
They no knight / koude han founde out swich a sleighte
But nouk to purpos / er pt Dayes eighte
Were passed / er the wonthe of Iuyl bifille
That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille
Through eggyng of his wyf / hym for to pleye
In his gardyn / and no knight but they tweye
That in a morwe vn to this may sweth he
Rys up my wyf / my loue / my lady free
The turtle voys is herd / my Dowue swete
The wynter is goon / with hise reynes wete
Com forth nouk / and with thyne eyen columbyn
How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn
The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute
Com forth my white spouse / out of doute
Thou hast me wounded / in myn herte / o wyf
No spot of thee / ne knowe I al my lyf
Com forth / and lat vs taken Com disport /
I chees thee for my wyf and my comfort /
Swiche olde lewed wordes used he
On Damyan / a signe made she
That he schulde go biforn / with his cliket
This Damyan thanne / hath opened the wyket /
And in he stapte / and that in swich maneye
That no knight wiste it / neither yeye
And stille he sit / vnder a bussh anon
This Ianuarie / as blynd as is a stoon
With many vn his hand / and no knight no
In to his fresshe gardyn is ago
And clapte to / the wyket cordeynly
Now wyf quod he / heere nys but thou and I
That art the creature / that I best love
For by that lord / that sit in heuene above
I leve ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf
Than thee offende / trewe dere wyf
For goddes sake / thenk / how I thee chees
Right / for no coueitise doutelees

But oonly for the loue I had to thee
And though pt I be oold and may nat see
Seth to me thelke and I shal telle yow why
Thise thynges certes shal ye Kynne they by
First loue of Crist and to youre self honory
And al myn heritage toun and tory
I yeue it yow maketh chaffres as yow leste
This shal be doon tomorwe er sonne reste
And finally god my soule bynge in blisse
I prey yow first in conclusion ye me kisse
And though pt I be jalous Kyte me nogh[t]
ye been so depe enpointed in my thogh[t]
That Kthan I consideye youre beautee
And they Kthe al the vnlikly elde of me
I may nat certes though I sholde dye
ffor dep to been out of youre compaignye
ffor dray loue this is Kith outen doute
Cros bys me Kyf and lat vs pleye aboute
This fleshe wayf Kthan she thise Kordes seyde
Benyngnely to Damyan answeyde
But first and forwardes she bigan to wepe
I haue quod she a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye and also myn honory
And of my Kyfhod thilke tendre flory
Which pt I haue assured in youre hond
Kthan pt the preest to yow my body bond
Wherfore I sholde answeye in this maneye
Ey the leue of yow my lord so deepe
I preye to god pt neuere dacke the day
That I ne steme as foule as Kouan may
If euere I do on to my Kyn that shame
Or elles I enpeyre so my name
That I be fals and if I do that lakke
Do streye me and put me in a sakke
And in the neyte tyme drow me drenche
I am a gentil Kouan and no Kenche
Why spoke ye thus but men been euermore vntrewe
And Kowen haue repreue of yow ay newe
ye han noon oothey countenance I leue
But spoke to vs of vntrust and repreue
And Kith that word she raught Kthey Damyan
Sat in the bussh and coughen she bigan
And Kith hir fyngers signes made she
That Damyan sholde clymbe vp on a tree
That charged Kas Kt fruyt and vp he Kent
ffor certainly he knew al hir entente
And euery signe pt she koude make
Wel bet than Damyan hir owene make

ffor in a lettre he hadde tooldd hym al
Of this matere / how he escheen shal
And thus he lete hym sitte vpon the tryne
And daunsyne and wayd pourynge wyne
Night was the day / and bleew the firmament
Phebus hath of gold / his stremes doun ysent
To gladen euery flour with his warmnesse
He was that tyme in Gemynis as I gesse
But litel fro his declynacion
Of Cancer / Jouis exaltacion
And so bifel that bigynte morwetyde
That in that gardyn / in the-estres syde
Pluto / that is kyng of ffayrye
And many a lady / in his compaignye
ffolwynge his wyf the queene Proserpyne
Ech after oother / right as a lyne
Whil pt she gadered flowres in the mede
In Claudyan / ye may the storie rede
And in his gyrdyl hadde he bisy sette
This kyng of ffayrye / thamme adoun hym sette
Vpon a bench of turves / fressh and grene
And right anon / thus seyde he to his queene
My lyf quod he / they may no wight seye nay
Thexperience / so preueth euery day
The tresons / whiche pt wommen doon to man
Ten hondred thousand / tellen I kan
Notable / of youre vntrouthe and brotilnesse
O Salomon / wys and richest of richesse
ffulfild of sapience / and of worldly glorie
fful worthy been thy werkes to memorie
To euery wight pt wit and resoun kan
Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man
Amonges a thousand men / yet fond I noon
But of wommen alle / fond I noon
Thus seith the kyng pt knoweth youre wikkednesse
And Salomon filius Syrak as I gesse
Ne speketh of youre but selde reuerence
A wyfle hyd / and ofte pestilence
Do falle vp on youre bodyes yet to nyght
Ne se ye nat / this honurable knyght
By cause allas / that he is blynd and old
His owene man / shal make hym cokewold
Lo heere he sit / the lecchour in the tree
Now Sire I graunte / of myn magestee
Vn to this olde blynde worthy knyght
That he shal haue ayeyn his eyen syght
Whan pt his wyf / wold doon hym vileynye
Thanne shal he knowen al hire harlotrye

The Marchaunts w

Sothe m̃ repreue of hym / and otheye mo
Ye shal quod Prosepyne / wol ye so I
Stroke by my modres eres couse / and herke
That I shal yeuen hym suffisaunt answere
And alle wommen after / for hir sake
That though they be in any gilt ytake
With face bold they shulle hem self excuse
And bere hem doun / that wolden hem accuse
For lakke of answere / noon of hem shal thryue
Al hadde man seyn a thyng / yt bothe his eyen
Yt shulde wommen / visage it hardily
And wepe / and make / his visage it dustily
& yt ye men / shul been / as lewed as gees
What reketh me / of youre auctoritees
Loot wel / that this Jew / this Salomon
Fond of wommen / foles many oon
But though yt he ne fond no good woman
Yet hath they / founde / many another man
Wommen ful trewe / ful good and vertuous
Witnesse on hem / yt dwelle in Cristes hous
With martirdom / they preued hir constance
The Romayn geestes / eek maken remembrance
Of many a verray / trewe wyf also
But oon ne list nat / hooly / al be it so
Though yt he seyde / he fond no good woman
I prey yow / take the sentence of the man
He meente thus / that in souerayn bontee
Nis noon / but god / yt nat in Trinitee
Ey for verray god / that nys but oon
What make ye / so muche of Salomon
What though he made a temple goddes hous
What though he were / riche and glorious
So made he eek / a temple of false goddis
How myghte he do a thyng / yt myne forbode is
Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastre
He was a lecherour / and an ydolastre
And in his elde / he verray god forsook
And if god ne hadde / as seith the book
Ystranyed for his fadres sake / he sholde
Have lost his regne / rather than he wolde
I sette nought nought / of al the vilanye
That ye of wommen write / a voteresse
I am a woman / nedes moot I speke
Or elles swelle / til myn herte breke
For sithen he seyde / that he dide trespasses
As clerkes rede / I moote breke myn tresses
I shal nat spare / for no curtesye
To speke hym harm / yt wolde vs vilanye

Dame quod this Pluto be no lenger Wroth
I yeue it vp but oth I woor myn oth
That I wolde graunten hym his sighte ageyn
Myn woos shal stonde I kepe it pleyn
I am a kyng it sit me nogh to lye
And quod she a Queene of ffayre
Thy answere shal she have I undertake
Let vs nameore woordes heer of make
ffor oothe I wol no lenger yow withsayne
Wrok sat or tayne agayn to Pluto
That in the gardyn with his fayre mayd
Syngeth ful merely than the popelay
yow love I best and shal and oothey noon
So longe aboute the alleyes is he goon
Til he was come agayns thilke payne
Narcisus as this Poet can feyne
Anseigh among the fresshe leves grene
This fresshe mayd that is so bright and sheene
Gan for to syke and seyde allas my syde
Wrok syr quod she for aught pt may betyde
I moste han of the peres that I see
Or I moot dye so soore longeth me
To eten of the smale peres grene
Help for thy love pt is of heven quene
I telle yow wel a woman in my plit
May han to fruyt so greet an appetit
That she may dyen but she of it have
Allas quod he pt I ne had heer a knave
That couthe clymbe allas allas quod he
That I am blynde ye syr noforce quod she
But wolde ye vouche sauf for goddes sake
The pyne with youre armes for to take
ffor wel I woot that ye mysthuste me
Thanne sholde I clymbe wel y nogh quod she
So my foot myghte sette up on youre bak
Certes quod he they on shal be no lak
Myghte I yow helpen pt myn herte blood
He stoupeth down and on his bak she stood
And caughte hym by a twiste and up she goth
Ladyes I preye yow pt ye be nat wroth
I kan nat glose I am a rude man
And doun anon this Damyan
Gan russhen up the smoke and in he thronge
And whan pt Pluto sawgh this grete wronge
To Proserpyne he gan agayn his sighte
And made hym se as wel as ever he myghte
And whan pt he had caught his sighte again
Lo was they neer man of thynges certayn

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But on his wyf his thought was euermo
Up to the tree he caste his eyen two
And saugh p^t Damyan his wyf had dressed
In suche wise as ye han herd expressed
But shortly to speke vnpitously
And vp he yaf a lowring and a cry
As doth the moody folish the child wold dye
Out help alias and harrow he gan to crye
O stronge lady store what doistow
And she answerde softe what eyleth you
Have patience and resoun in your mynde
And leue your wepyng for your eyen blynde
Up pil of my smok and ye shal wel seen
As wel as I whan I was al with eyen tweyn
Ther stant no thyng bet to make you to see
Than stroght er a man vp on a tree
God woot and rede it in ful good entente
Stroght quod he algate in it wente
God yeue your both on shames deth to dyen
He scorneth thee and laugheth with myne eyen
And elles be I hanged by the halse
Thanne is quod she my medicyne falce
For certeinly if that ye myghte se
Ye sholde nat seyn thise wordes vn to me
Ye han som gliterynge and no parfit sighte
I se quod he as wel as ye and myghte
Thonked be god and bothe myne eyen two
And by my trouthe me thoughte he dide thee so
Ye maze maze goode eye quod she
Thise thankes have I for I have made you see
Alias quod she that euer I was so kynde
Now haue quod he I wil apaye out of myn mynde
Com doun my lief and if I have myssayd
God help me so as I am al apayd
But by my fader soule and ther to nyne seyn
Hold that this Damyan hadde by thee leyn
And with his stook hadde leyn vp on his heed
Ye eye quod she ye may wene as your lest
But eye a man with stareth out of his heed
He may nat discerne wel taken heed
Vp on a thyng me deen it parfitly
Ful with a man with longe hath blynd yse
He may nat discerne so wel ye
First whan his sighte is newe come agein
As he with hath a day or two yseyn
Ful that youre sighte ystabled be a while
They may ful many a sighte your begile

Seth Ka[y] I prey yow for hy[s] seuene tymes
fful many a man seeneth to seen a thyng
And it is al another than it seemeth
he p[t] myscondyseth he myseemeth
And with that word she sank doun fro the tree
This Januarie who is glad but he
he kisseth hym and clippeth hym ful ofte
And on hys coumbe he stroketh hym ful softe
And to his palays room he hath hym led
Now goode men I pray yow be glad
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie
God blesse us and his moodyr mayde Marie

Heere is endid the Marchantes tale of Januarie

The prologe of the Squieres tale

Ey goddes mercy seyde our hoost tho
Now cheuch a wyf I pray god kepe me fro
Swiche sleightes and subtiltees
In wommen been for ay as bisy as bees
Been they of yeuyng men for to deceyue
And fro a sooth euere wol they weyue
By this marchantes tale it preueth weel
But deuteleee as thee as any steel
I haue a wyf though p[t] she poure be
But of hy[r] tonge a labbyng shrewe is she
And yet she hath an heep of vices mo
Ther of no force lat alle swiche thynges go
But wyto ye what in conseil be it seyd
I wyte yeleueth sooth I am vnwyd
For and I sholde yeknouen euery vice
Which p[t] she hath ywis I were to nyce
And cause why it sholde reported be
And told to hyr of some of hys meynee
Of whom it needeth nat for to declare
Syn wommen connen outen swich chaffare
And eek my wit suffiseth nat they to
Discryue al therfore my tale is do
Syn they conne wey if it youre wille be
And ey conne what of lowe for ees ye
Connen they ou as muche as any man
Nay seye quod he but I wol seye as I kan
With hertly wyl for I wol nat yebelle
Agayn youre lust a tale wol I telle

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Squyer

Have me excused if I speke amys
My tyl is good and to my tales is this

Here bigynneth the Squieres tale

At Sarray in the lond of Tartarye
There dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye
Thurgh which there dyde many a doughty man
This noble kyng was clepyed Cambyuskan
Which in his tyme was of so grete renon
That there was no kyng in no region
So excellent a lord in alle thyng
Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng
And of the sette of which pt he was born
He kepte his lay to which pt he was sworn
And they to he was hardy wys and rych
And pitous and just alwey ylych
Sooth of his word benigne and honurable
Of his corage as any centre stable
Yong fresh strong and in armes desirous
As any bachelor of al his hous
A fayr persone he was and fortunat
And kepte alwey so wel royal estat
That there was no kyng that was his pere
This noble kyng this Tartre Cambyuskan
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf
Of which the eldeste highte Algarsyf
That other sone was clepyed Camballo
A doughter hadde this worthy kyng also
That yongest was and highte Canacee
But for to telle yow al hir beautee
It lyth nat in my tonge ne in my konnyng
I dar nat vndertake so heigh a thyng
Myn englissh eek is insufficeant
I moste been a rethor excellent
That koude his colours longgynge for thett art
If I shold hem discryven eueryn part
And som del deel I moot speke as I kan
And so bifel that this Cambyuskan
Hath twenty winter born his diademe
As he was wont from yeer to yeer and seme
The feeste of his natiuitee
Solempnely with al his cite
The sixte day of marche after the yeer
Phebus the sonne ful wel was and cleer
For he was neigh his exaltacion
In marles face and in his mansion

Squiere

In Aries the colerik hoote signe
fful lusty was the Sesen and benigne
ffor which the fokeles agayn the coune sheene
Shat for the reson and the yonge greene
fful loude songen hir affections
Hem semed han geten hem protections
Agayn the Seyd of Gyntey keene and coold
This Tanbyuskan of which I have yow toold
In ioial Sestiment sit on his Seys
With Shasene ful heighe in his paleys
And halt his feeste solempne and so ryche
That in this Eorld was they noon it lyche
Of which if I shal tellen al thanay
Thanne Wolde it occupie a Sodnes day
And eek it neseth nat for to deuyse
At eny couns the ooste of hir seruyse
I Wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes
Ne of hir Beanues nor of hir heyouskes
Wek in that lond as tellen kny3tes olde
They is som mete pt is ful deyute holde
That in this lond men yeeche of it but smal
They nyse no man that may reporten al
I Wol nat taryen yow for it is tyme
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme
Un to my fayste I Wole have my tetons
And so bifel that after the thridde couns
Whil pt this kyng sit thus in his noblesse
Herkenynge hise minstralles hir thynges plesse
Biforn hym at the boord deliciously
In at the halle dore al sodenly
They saw a kny3t upon a Steede of bras
And in his hand a hoood wynony of glas
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ryng
And by his syde a naked Swerd hangyng
And up he ryt to the hegh boord
In al the halle ne was they spoken a Word
For merueille of this kny3t hym to biholde
Ful bisily they Waryen yonge and olde
This straunge kny3t that cam thus sodenly
Al armed Save his heed ful richely
Salueth kyng and queene and lordes alle
By ordre as they seten in the halle
With so heigh reuerence and obeisance
As Wel in speche as in contenance
That Sir Gawayn with his olde curteisie
Though he were comen ayen out of fayrie
Ne Wolde hym nat amende with a Word
And after this biforn the heighe boord

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He with a manly voys / seith his message
after the forme / vsed in his langage
With outen vice / of sylable / or of letter
And for his tale / sholde seme the better
Accordaunt to his wordes / was his speche
As techeth art of speche / how p^t it shee
Al be / that I kan nat counte his stile
Ne kan nat clymben / on so heigh a style
Yet seye I this / as to myne entente
Thus muche amounteth / al p^t eende he mente
If it so be / p^t I have it in myinde
He seyde / the kyng of Arabe and of Inde
My lige lord / on this solempne day
Saleweth yow / as he best kan and may
And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feeste
By me / that am al redy at youre heeste
This steede of bras / that esily and weel
Kan in the space / of o day natureel
This is to seyn / in foure and twenty houres
Wher so yow lyst / in Broghte or elles stoures
Beren youre body / in to every place
To which yow hert to / wilneth for to pace
With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair
Or if yow lyst / to fleen / as hye in the air
As doth an Egle / whan p^t hym list to soore
This same steede / shal bere yow and moore
With outen harm / til ye be there yow leste
Though that ye slepen / on his bak or reste
And turne ayein / with writhyng / of a pyn
He p^t it broghte / koude ful many a gyn
He wayted / many a constellacion
Er he / was boon / this operacion
And knew ful many a deel / and many a bond
This same / steede of bras / that I of telle
Hath wher so a mygh^t / p^t men may in it dwelle
Ne how they shal falle / may destitue
Un to youre regne / or to youre self also
And openly / who is youre freend or foo
And over al this / if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte / in any manere wight
If he be false / she shal his treson see
His newe love / and al his subtilte
So openly / p^t there shal no thyng hyde
Wherfore / ageyn this falshed I thee bide
This mirour / and this ryng / p^t ye may see
He hath sent / me to my lady Canace
Youre excellente doghter / that is here
The vertu of the ryng / if ye wol here

Of the vertu of the steede of bras

Of the vertu of the mirour

Of the vertu of the ryng

Is this / that if hys lust it for to bere
Upon hys thombe / or vnhys purs it bere
Ther is no fobel / pt fleeth vndyr the heuene
That ofe / ne dyst / bel vndyrstonde his steuene
And knoke his meanyng / openly and pleyn
And answere hym / in his langage ageyn
And eche glas / that glydeth vpon poote
Ofe dyst eek knoke / and eschon it bol do boote
Al be hise wounde / ned so depe and wyde
This makes dreed / pt hangeth by myn syde
Eek dru hath / pt that man so ye smyte
Thurgh out his armure / it bole hym keepe and byte
Depe it as thilke / as is a blanched ook
And that man / that is wounded pt a stroke
Dyst ned be hool / til pt yonge lyst of grace
To stroke hym pt the plat / in that place
Ther he is hurt / this is as muche to seyn
Ye moote / with the plat dreed ageyn
Stike hym in the wounde / and it bol close
This is a dyat sooth / without glose
Pt fadeth nat / whils it is in youre hoold
And whan this knyght / hath thus / his tale toold
He rydeth out of halle / and doun he lighte
His steede / which pt schoon / as eny lighte
Daunt in the court / stille as any stoon
This knyght / is to his chambre gan anoon
And is vnarmed / and vn to mete yset
The prentes / been / ful semely yset /
This is to seyn / the dreed and the wynny
And born anon / in to the heighe deys
With diuine offices / ordeyned therfore
And vn to Canacee / this eyng / was bore
Solempnely / they ete / at the table
But dyscreetly / with outen any fable
The hors of bras / pt may nat be remeued
Pt stant / as it were / to the ground yglewed
Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue
For noon engyn / of Ermondas ne polyue
And cause why / for they kan nat the craft /
And they fore / in the place / they han it laft /
Til pt the knyght / with craught hem the maneye
To voyden hym / as ye dyst after heere
Next gan the press / pt approcheth to and fro
To gauren on this hors / that stondeth so
For it so heigh was / and so hoog and long /
So wel proporcioned / for to ben strong /
Right as it were / a steede of Lumbardye
Ther with so horsly / and so quyk of eye

Of the vertu of the dreed mirr

Squiere

Was it a gentil Pouleys squyer
ffor ches / flo his tayl / vn to his eye
Statuye no apt / no koude hym nat amende
In no degree / as al the pepls kende
But euermoore / his mooste wondey was
Hoss pt it koude go / and was of bras
It was a ffayre / as al the pepls semed
Diuse folk / diuersely they demed
As many heddes / as many here bitter they been
They muymuren / as doth a scharm of been
And maden skiles / after hir fantasies
Reherseynge / of this olde poetries
And seyde / that it was lyk the pegase
The hors / pt hadde wynges for to flee
Or elles / it was the grekes hors Synon
That broght to Troie to destruccion
As men / in thise olde gestes rede
Thyn hepte quod oon / is euermoore in drede
I trowe / oon men of armes been they / parde
That offeren hem / this citee for to pyne
It were right good / pt al swich thyng were knowe
Anothey yorkmen / to his felawe lowe
And seyde se heeth / it is rather lyk
An apparence / ymaad by som wyngyk
As Iogelours pleyen / at thise feestes grete
Of sondry sortes / thus they iangle & trete
As lewed pepl / demeth comunly
Of thynges / pt been maad / moore subtilly
Than they kan / in hir lewednesse comprehende
They semen gladly / to the bataye entende
And some of hem / wondred on the symylitude
That Ioon was vp / in to the hye welkne
How men myghte in it / swiche thynges se
Anothey answerde / and seyde it myghte wel be
Naturelly / by compossicions
Of angles / and of slye reflexions
And seyden / pt in Rome was swich oon
They speken / of Alocen and Vitulon
And Aristotle / that writen in hir lynes
Of queynte mirrours / and of parchitectes
As knowen they / that han hir bookes herd
And oothey folk han wondred on the werke
That wolde preu / thrugh out euery thyng
And fille in spechs / of Tholomeus the kyng
And of Archilles / with his queynte speere
ffor he koude with it / bothe hele and sle
Right in swich wise / as men may wel the shaft
Of Thelephus / ryght nowe / ye han youre selven herd

They speken of sondry hardyng of metal
And speke of medicynes therwith al
And hoke and shame it sholde yshapen be
Which is vnkuthe algates vnto me
Tho speeke they of drauacees flying
And seyden alle pt swich a wondre thing
Of craft of yonges seyde they men noon
Owe pt se moyses and kyng salomon
hadde a name of konnyng in swich art
Thus seyn the peple and dradden hem apart
But nathelees wel seyden pt it was
Wondre to maken of fern asshen glas
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern
But for they han knowen it so fern
Therfore cesseth his janglyng & his wondre
Al soore wondren we on cause of thondre
On ebbe on flood on gossomer and on myst
And alle thyng til pt the cause is wyst
Thus janglen they and wonder and wayue
Til pt the kyng gan fro the bord arryse
Phebus hath laft the angle meridional
And yet ascendyng was the beest ryal
The gentil leon with his alspian
Shan pt this Jantyl kyng cambyuskan
Doos fro his bord they that he sat ful hye
Before him goth the loude vnynstrualye
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz
Ther as they sholden his instrumentz
That it is lyk an heuene for to heere
Tho trompes stanen lustily vnder cleere
For in the fyrste his lady sat ful hye
And looketh on hem with a wery eye
This noble kyng is set vp in his trone
This strange knyght is fet to him ful soone
And on the daunce he gooth with Canace
Here is the reuel and the jolitee
That is nat able a dul man to deuyse
He moste han knowen love and his seruyse
And been a festlych man as fresshe as May
That sholde yow deuysen eech array
Tho kouthe telle yow the forme of daunces
So quaynte and so fresshe contenaunces
Eech subtil lokyng and dissymulynges
For drede of jalousie myghty jelynges
No man but lancelot and he is dede
Therfore I passe of al this lustiheede
I seye nat oore but in this pleyn processe
Lete hem ful myen to the laste fulle

Squier

The Strydaste bet Spices for to hyre
And eek the Eyn in al this melodye
The vessels and the Spices been ygoon
The Spices and the Eyn is comen anoon
They ete and dynke and Eschan this ladde an ende
Un to the temple as resun Eas they Eende
The service doon they soupen al by day
Eshat nedeth me resehen hyr away
Ech man Eoot Eel pt a Kynges feeste
Hath plentee to the moste and to the leeste
And deyntees mo than been in myn Knockyng
At after Supey gooth this noble Kyng
To seen this hors of bras et al the route
Of ladies and of ladyes hyin aboute
Eeich Eondryng Eas they on this hors of bras
That eyn the grete sege of Troie Eas
-b Me Eas they eeich a Eondryng as Eas tho
-a They as men Eondicten on an hors also
But fynally the Kyng axeth this knyght
The vertu of this Counsey and the myght
And prayde hyin to telle his gouvernance
This hors anoon bigan to trippe and daunce
Eshan that this knyght leyde hand upon his reyne
And seyde sire they is nat mooste to reyne
But Eshan yoke list to hyden any Eheye
Ye moote nempne hyin to Ehat place also
Or to Ehat contree pt yoke list to ryde
And Eshan ye come they as yoke list abyde
Bidde hyin Eestewe and tylle another pyn
ffor they lith theffect of al the gyn
And he Eol doun Eestewe and doon youre Eille
And in that place he Eol stonde stille
Though al the Eorld the contre sholde ayeyne
He shal nat thennes been ydrawe nor yleyne
Or if yoke list bidde hyin thennes goon
Tylle this pyn and he Eol vanysshe anoon
Out of the sighte of every mannes sight
And come ageyn be it day or nyght
Eshan pt yoke list he Eeyen hyin ageyn
In Eeich a gyse as I shal to yoke seyn
But kype yoke and nis and that ful soone
Bidde Eshan yoke list they is nat mooste to doone
Tho Eerde Eshan the Kyng Eas of that knyght
And hath conceyved in his Eit a sight
The manere and the forme of al this thyng
Thus glad was he this noble Kyng

Repeteth to his ieuel as biforn
The bryde is bu to the tour yborn
And kept among hise queles scene & deepe
The hors vanysshes & noot in eyght maneye
Out of hir sighte ye gete manooze of me
But thus I sete in lust and solitee
This daunsyng han hise lordes festeyinge
Til eek my the day bigan to apyinge

Explicit prima pars

Incipit pars secunda

The norice of digestion the sleep
Gan on hem clymbe and bad hem taken keep
That muchel drynke and labo[r] wolde han reste
And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste
And seyde it was tyme to lye adoun
For blood was in his domynacioun
Cherissheth blood natures freend quod he
They thanken hym galpyinge by two by thre
And every wight gan diffye hym to his reste
As sleep hem bad they tooke it for the beste
The stewes shul nat been ytoold for me
Ful eyghe hir heddes of fumositee
That causeth sleep of which they nyl no charge
They sleepen til that it was pryme large
The moore part but it were daunces
Ther was ful mesyable at commune se
For of hir fare hadde ther take leue
To goon to reste soone after it was eue
Hir liste nat appalled for to be
Ne on the morwe unfestlich for to se
And slepte hir fulle sleep and thaune awook
For which a noyse ther in hir herte took
Bothe of hir ryche ayente lyng and hir tyrony
That tweynty tymes ther changed hir colony
And in hir sleep right for impression
Of hir tyrony ther hadde avision
Wherfore er pt the morne gan vp glyde
She clepes on hir wymmen hir bityde
And seyde that hir liste for to ryse
Thise olde women pt been gladly wyse
As hir wymmen answerde hir anon
And seyde madame whider wil ye goon
Thus erly for the folk been alle on reste
Col quod she ryse for me leste

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No lenger for to dele/ and talke aboute
The wayfaresse/ clepeth Cambuscan/ a greet loute
And by they lyven/ bel an ten/ or tkeline
Up riseth/ freissho Canacee/ hir seline
As rody and bright/ as dooth the yonge sonne
That in the Ram/ is fowe degrees up ronne
Noon hiere was he/ whan she rody was
And forth she walketh/ esily a pas
Arrayed/ after the lusty seson soote
Lightly for to pleye/ and walke on foote
Nat but fyue or sixe/ of hir meynee
And in a trench/ forth in the park gooth she
The vapour/ which p^t for the erthe glood
Made the sonne/ to seme rody and blood
But nathelees/ it was so fair a sighte
That it made/ alle hir hertes for to lighte
What for the seson/ and the morwenynges
And for the foweles/ that she herde singe
For right anon/ she wiste what they mente
Right by hir song/ and knew al hir entente
The knotte/ why p^t euery tale is told
If it be taried/ til that lust be cold
Of hem p^t han/ it afore-herkned yoore
The statuour passeth/ ay lenger the moore
For fulsomnesse/ of his prolixitee
And by the same reson/ thynketh me
I sholde/ to the knotte condescende
And maken of hir walkyng/ soone ende
And so hir fil/ by a tree/ forsyde/ as whit as chalk/
As Canacee/ was pleyyng/ in hir walk/
Ther sat a fawcon/ ouh hir hood ful fyne
That with a pitous voys/ so gan to pyne
That al the wode/ resouned of hir cry
Ybeten hath she hir self/ so pitously
With bothe hir wynges/ til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree/ ther she stood
And ever in oon/ she cryde alwey and shrighte
And with hir beek/ hir self she so prighte
That ther nys tygre/ ne noon so cruel beest/
That natural/ outher in wode or in forest/
That nolde han wept/ if p^t he wepe koude
For sorwe of hir/ she shrighte alwey so loude
For ther was noon/ yet on hir hus
If p^t he koude/ a fawcon wel destruye
That hewe of which another of fairnesse
As wel of plumage/ as of gentillesse
Of shape/ and al that myghte ylikened be
A fawcon peregryn/ thanne semed she

Of fremde lande / and eftemoore as she stood
She wroughte nowt and nowt / for lakke of blood
Til ferli neigh / is she fallen flo the tree
¶ This fayre kynges doghter Canacee
That on hir fyngre / bar the queynte ryng
Thurgh which she understood ferli eny thyng
That any foweel / may vn his leden seyn
And koude answeren hym / vn his ledene ageyn
Hath understonde / what this ffaucon seyde
And ferli neigh / for the pitee / almoost she deyde
And to the tree / she gooth ful hastily
And on this ffaukon / loketh pitously
And heeld hir lappe abroad / for wel she wiste
The ffaukon / moste fallen flo the tryste
Fro han pt it sholdnes next / for lakke of blood
A longe while / to wayten hym she stood
Til atte laste / she spak in this manere.
Vn to the hauk / as ye shal after heere
¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle
That ye be / in this foreyn pyne of helle
Quod Canacee / vn to the hauk / alone
Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of lone
ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two
That causeth most / a gentil herte wo
Of outhey hath / it nedeth nat to speke
ffor ye youre self / vpon your self wole wreke
Which proeueth wel / that outhey love or drede
Moot been enchesoun / of youre cruel dede
Syn pt I see / noon outhey wight yow chace
ffor love of god / as dooth youre owen grace
Or what may been youre help / for west nor est
Fro haugh I neile ey nowt / no bryd we beest
That feyde with hym self / so pitously
Ye sle me with youre sorwe verraily
I haue of yow / so greet passion
ffor goddes love / com flo the tree adoun
And as I am / a kynges doghter treewe
If pt I verraily / the cause knewe
Of youre disese / if it lay in my myght
I wolde amenden it / ey pt it were myght
As trewly help me / the grete god of kynde
And herbes / shal I right ynowe ifynde
To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
¶ Tho sighte this ffaucon / moore yet pitously
Than ere she dide / and fil to grounde anon
And lith a swowne ded / and lyk a stoon
Til Canacee / hath in hir lappe hir take
Vn to the tyme / she gan of swough awake

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And after that/ she of hir shroughs gan espyde
Right vn hir haukes sedene/ thus she seyde
That pitee/ renneth soone vn gentil herte
ffeelyinge his similitudo/ vn peynes smerte
Is preues aldayˆ/ as men mayˆ see
As wel byˆ reson/ as byˆ auctoritee
ffor gentil herte/ kitheth gentillesse
As wel/ ye han of myˆ distresse
Compassion/ myˆ faire Emaree
Of whichˆ communalyˆ beningnytee
That nature/ vn youre pˆuyples hath yˆset/
But for noon hope/ for to fayn the bet/
But for obeye vn to youre herte free
And for to maken others/ be ray byˆ me
As byˆ the whelp/ chaffed is the leon
Right for that cause/ and for that conclusion
Whil pˆt I haue/ a leyser and a space
Myn hap vn tol confessen er I pace
And eke/ whil pˆt non hir sorwe tolde
That others weep/ as she to water wolde
Til that the ffaucon/ bad hir to be stille
And pˆt a syk/ right thus she seyde hir Wille
That I was bred/ allas that hapˆe day
And fostred vn a roche/ of marbul gray
So tendrely/ that no thyng eyled me
I nyste nat/ what was adversitee
Til I conde flee ful hye vndey the sky
Tho dwelte a tercelet/ me faste by
That semed welle/ of alle gentillesse
Al were he ful of treson/ and falsnesse
It was so wrapped/ vndey humble cheere
And vndey herte of trouthe/ vn swich manere
Vndey plesance/ and vndey bisy peyne
That I ne conde han wend/ he conde feyne
So depe vn grevn/ he dyed his colour
Right as a serpent/ hit hyn vndey flowes
Til he may seen/ his time for to byte
Right so this god of loue/ this ypocryte
Doth so his ceremonyes and obeysances
And kepeth vn semblant/ alle his observances
That sowneth/ vn to gentillesse of loue
As vn a tombe/ is al the faire aboue
And vndey- is the corps/ swich as ye woot/
Swich was the ypocrite/ bothe wood and hoot/
And vn this wise/ he serued his entente
That same the feend/ noon lyste what he mente
Til he so longe/ hadde hoped and complayned
And many a yeer/ his seruice to me freyned

¶ Squier

In that myn herte / to pitous and to myce
Al innocent / of his corouned malice
ffor feyd of his deeth / as thoughte me
Upon hise othes / and his seuretee
Graunted hym sone / upon this condicion
That euermoore / myn honor and renon
Were saued / bothe pryue and apert /
This is to seyn / that after his desert /
I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thoght /
God woot and he / pt oother knyst noght /
and took his herte / in chaunge for myn for ay
But sooth is seyd / goon sithen many a day
A trewe wight and a theef / thenken nat oon
And certain he raught / the thyng so fer ygoon
That I hadde graunted hym / fully my lord
In swich a gyse / as I haue seyd aboue
And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as free
as he or moore / he yaf his herte to me
Anon this Theyf / ful of doubleneesse
fil on his knees / with so deuout humblesse
With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere
So lyk a gentil lord / of manere
So vanyssheb / as it semed for the joye
That nere deyd / ne pangs of Troye
Jason certes / ne noon oother man
Syn Tubal caym / pt alderfirst bigan
To louen two / as writen folk biforn
Ne neuer / syn the firste man was born
Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part /
Counterfete / the sophymes of his art /
Ne feyne thynges / vnbokelen his galoche
Ther doubleneesse / or feynyng / sholde approche
Ne so koude thonke a wight / as he dide me
his maner / was an heuene for to see
Til any woman / were she neuer so wys
So perfited he / and koude at point deuys
As wel his wordes / as his contenance
And I loued hym / for his obeisance
And for the thought / I demed in his herte
That if so were / that any thyng hym smerte
Al were it neuer so lite / and I it wiste
Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twiste
And shortly / so ferforth / this thyng is went
That my wyl / was his willes instrument /
This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wyl
In alle thynges / as fer as reson fil
Keepynge the bounde / of my worship ever
Ne neuer hadde I thyng / so leef ne leef

As hym god boot no nede shal nemo
This lasteth lenger thenn a yeer or two
That I suppose of hym noght but good
But finally thus atte laste it stood
That fortune wolde pt he moste thennе
Out of that place which pt I was inne
Ther me was wo that is no question
I kan nat make of it discripcion
For o thyng dar I tellen boldely
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther by
Which hayn I felte for inne myghte bileve
So on a day of me he took his leve
So sorwefully eek that I wende wodly
That he has felt as muche harm as I
Whan pt I seyde hym speke I raught his herte
But natheles I thoughte he was so smerte
And eek pt he repaire sholde ageyn
Within inne a litel while soth to seyn
And resoun wolde eek that he moste go
For his honour as ofte it happeth so
That I made vertu of necessitee
And took it wel syn pt it moste be
As I best myghte I hidde fro hym myn sorwe
And took hym by the hond seint John to borwe
And seyde hym thus lo I am youres al
Deth worch as I to you have been and shal
What he answerde it needeth nought reherce
Who kan seye bet than he who kan do werse
Whan he hath al seyd thanne hath he doon
Therfore bihoveth hym a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend thus herde I seye
So atte laste he moste forth his weye
And forth he fleeth til he cam ther hym lefte
Whan it cam hym to pas for to refte
I torne he hadde thilke text in mynde
That alle thyng repreef ynge to his kynde
Gladeth hym self thus seyn men as I gesse
Men loven of yore kynde nelwefangelnesse
As briddes doon that men in cages fede
For though thou myghst a day take of hem hede
And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk
And yeve hem sugre hony bred and milk
Yet nought a non as that his dore is upe
He eft his feet wol mynne adoun his cupe
And to the wode he wolde and wormes ete
So nel wel fin ther of hym mete
And louen mochel more of propre kynde
No gentillesse of blood may hem bynde

Requiescat in pace Amen

¶ So ferde this Tercelet alias the day
Though he were gentil born fressh and gay
And goodlich for to seen humble and free
He caught vp on a tyme a kyte flee
And certeinly he loued this kyte so
That al his lous is clene fro me ago
And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse
Thus hath the kyte my loue in hir seruyse
And I am lorn withouten remedie
And with that word this ffaucon gan to crie
And sobbed eft in Canacees barm
¶ Greet was the sorwe for the haukes harm
That Canacee and alle hir women made
They nyste how they myghte the ffaucon glade
But Canacee how beyeth hir in hir lappe
And softely in plastres gan hir wrappe
Ther as she with hir beek hadde hurt hir selue
Now kan nat Canacee but herbes delue
Out of the ground and make salues newe
Of herbes precious and fyne of hewe
To healen with this fro day to nyght
She doth hir busynesse and hir full myght
And by hir bedde heed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettes blewe
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene
And al eft oute the mewe is peynted grene
In which ther weren peynted alle thise false folkes
As beth thise tidyues tercelettes and pokes
Right for despit ther peynted hem bisyde
And pyes on hem for to chide and chyde
¶ Thus lete I Canacee hir hauk keepyng
I wol nat longe as now speke of hir wyng
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this ffaucon gat hir loue ageyn
Repentaunt as the storie telleth vs
By mediacion of Cambalus
The kynges sone of which I yow tolde
But hennes forth I wol my processe holde
To speken of auentures and of batailles
That neuer yet was herd so grete mervailles
ffirst wol I telle yow of Cambyuskan
That in his tyme many a citee wan
And after wol I speke of Algarsif
How that he wan Theodora to his wif
For which ful ofte in greet peril he was
Ne hadde he be holpen by the steede of bras
And after wol I speke of Cambalo
That fought in lystes or the barres two

Quiet ye

Her Cantatee / ey that he wyghte hys Lyvnne
an they ¶ leste / ¶ Sol ayeyn bigynne

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Incipit pars tercia

Apollo Lyueth vp his chaar so hye
Til that the god Mercurius hous the Lye

Heere endeth the wordes of the Frankeleyn to the Squier
and the wordes of the Hoost to the Frankeleyn

Ey feith Squier thow hast thee wel yquit
And gentilly I preise wel thy wit
Quod the Frankeleyn considerynge thy yowthe
So feelyngly thou spekest sire I allowe the
As to myn wonn they is noon that is heere
Of eloquence that shal be thy peere
If that thou lyve god yeve thee good chaunce
And vertu sende thee continuaunce
For of thy speche I have gret deyntee
I have a sone and by the Trinitee
I had leve than twenty pound worth lond
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond
He were a man of wel more discrecion
Than that ye been fy on possession
But if a man be vicious withal
I have my sone enfibbed and yet shal
For he to vertu listneth nat entende
But for to pleye at dees and to despende
And lese al that he hath is his usage
And he hath levere talken with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight
Ther he might lerne gentillesse aright
Straw for your gentillesse quod our Hoost
What Frankeleyn pees sire wel thou Hoost
Ech of yow moot telle atte leste
A tale or two or breken his biheste
That knowe I wel sire quod the Frankeleyn
I prey yow hold me nat in desdeyn
Though to this man I speke or two
Telle on thy tale with outen wordes mo
Gladly sire Hoost quod he I wole obeye
Un to your wyl now herkneth what I seye
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse
I prey to god that it may plesen yow
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow

Explicit

Ffranklevyn

The prologe of the ffranklevyns tale

Thise olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes made
Of diuerse auentures maden layes
Rymeyed in hir first Breton tonge made
Whiche layes with hir instrumentz they songe
Or elles redden hem for hir plesance
And oon of hem have I in remembrance
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan
But sires by cause I am a burel man
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche
Have me excused of my rude speche
I lerned never Retorik certeyn
Thyng pt I speke it moot be bare and pleyn
I slepe never on the mount of Pernaso
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero
Colours ne knowe I none with outen drede
But swiche colours as growen in the mede
Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte
Colours of Rethoryk been to queynte
My spirit feeleth noght of swich matere
But if yow list my tale shul ye here

Here bigynneth the ffranklevyns tale

In armorik that called is Bretaigne
Ther was a knyght that loued and dide his payne
To serue a lady in his beste wise
And many a labour many a greet emprise
For he for his lady wroghte er she were wonne
ffor she was oon the fayreste vnder sonne
And eek therto come of so heigh kynrede
That wel vnnethes dorste this knyght for drede
Telle hir his wo his peyne and his distresse
But atte laste she for his worthynesse
And namely for his meke obeysaunce
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce
That pryuely she fil of his accord
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord
Of swich lordshipe as men hir wolden yeve
And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyues
Of his free wyl he swoor hir as a knyght
That nevere in al his lyf he day ne nyght
Ne sholde vp on hym take no maistrye
Agayn hir wyl ne kithe hir jalousie

¶ But his obeye / and folde his tyl in al
As any louere / to his lady shal
Saue / that the name of souereynetee
That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree
¶ She thanked hym / and with ful goed humblesse
She seyde sire / with of youre gentillesse
ye profle me / to haue so large a reyne
We wolde nedes god / bitwye vs tweyne
As in my gilt / were outher skerne or stryf
Sire / I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf
Haue heer my trouthe / til pt myn herte breste
Thus been they / bothe in quiete and in reste
¶ For o thyng sires / saufly dar I seye
That freendes / euych oother moot obeye
If they wol longe / holden companye
Loue / wol nat been constreyned by maistrye
Whan maistrye cometh / the god of loue anon
Beteth his wynges / and farewel he is gon
Loue is a thyng / as any spirit free
Women of kynde / desiren libertee
And nat / to been constreyned as a thral
And so doon men / if I sooth seyen shal
Looke / who pt is moost patient in loue
he is / at his auantage al aboue
Patience / is an heigh vertu certeyn
For it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn
Thynges / pt angry / sholde neuer atteyne
For euery word / men may nat chide or pleyne
Lerneth to suffre / or elles so moot I goon
ye shul it leyne / wher so ye wole or noon
For in this world / ther no wight is
That he ne doth or seith / som tyme amys
Ire / syknesse / or constellacion
Wyn / wo / or chaungynge of complexion
Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken
On euery / lyong / a man may nat be wreken
After the tyme / moste be temperaunce
To euery wight / pt hath on gouernaunce
And therfore / hath this wise worthy knyght
To lyue in ese / suffraunce hym dyde right
And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere
That neuer / sholde they / be rebelle in here
¶ Here may men seen an humble wys accord
Thus hath she take / his servant and his lord
Servant in loue / and lord in maryage
Thanne was he / bothe in lordshipe and seruage
Seruage / may / wel in lordshipe aboue
Sith she hath / bothe his lady and his loue

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x

Tr Franklein &c

His lady cryes / and his wyf also
The which / pt lakke of loue agreeth to
And whan he was / in this prosperite
Home to his wyf / he gooth to his contree
That fer-fro pryuacye / they his dwellyng was
Where as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas
Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be
The ioye / the ese / and the prosperite
That is / bitwixe an housbonde / and his wyf
A yeer / and more / lasted this blisful lyf
Til pt the knyght / of whom I speke of thus
That of Kayrrud / was cleped Aurelius
Shoop hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
In Engelond / that cleped was eek Britayne
To seke in armes / worshyp and honour
For al his lust / he sette in armes labour
And dwelled there two yeer / the book seith thus
Now hold I stynten / of this Aurelius
And speken I wole / of Dorigene his wyf
That loueth hyr housbonde / as hyr herte lyf
For his absence / wepeth she and siketh
As doon thise noble wyves / whan hem liketh
She moorneth / waketh / waylleth / fasteth / pleyneth
Desyr of his presence / hyr so destreyneth
That al this faire world / she sette at nought
Hyr freendes / whiche pt knewe hyr herte thought
Conforten hyr / in al pt evere they may
They pleyen hyr / they telle hyr nyght and day
That causeles / she sleeth hyr self alas
And every confort / possible in this cas
They doon to hyr / with al hyr busynesse
Al for to make hyr / leve hyr heevynesse
Hope pryes / as ye han herd eneychoon
Men may so longe / graven in a stoon
Til som figure / therin ymette be
So longe han they conforted hyr / til she
Receyved hath / by hope and by resoun
The emprintyng / of hyr consolacioun
Through which / hyr grete sorwe gan aswage
She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage
And eek Aurelius / in al this tyme
Hath sent hyr lettres hoom / of his welfare
And pt he wol come hastily agayn
Or elles hadde this sorwe / hyr herte slayn
Hyr freendes sawe / hyr sorwe gan to slake
And preyde hyr on knees / for goddes sake
To come / and romen hyr in compaignye
Away to dryve / hyr derke fantasye

¶ Thus finally she graunted that requeste
ffor wel she ought / that it was for the beste
¶ Nou stood hir castel faste by the see
And often with hir freendes walketh shee
hir to disporte upon the bank anoughs
Where as she many a ship and barge sought
Secillynge hir cours / where hem liste go
But thanne was that a pryel of hir wo
ffor to hir self / ful ofte alias seith she
Is there no ship / of so manye as I se
Wol bringen hom my lord thanne kepe myn heste
Al gan she of hir litle peynes oneste
¶ Another tyme / ther-to she cotte and thynke
And caste hir eyen doun-ward / whan she synke
But whan she sought / the grisly wolfes blake
ffor verray feere / so wolde hir herte quake
That on hir feet / she myghte hir nought susteene
Thanne wolde she / cotte adoun upon the greene
And pitously / in to the see biholde
And seyn right thus / as sorweful ones wolde
¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purveiance
Ledest the world / by certein governance
In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make
But lord / thise grisly feendly wolfes blake
That semen / wel a foul confusion
Of werk / than any fair creacion
Of such a parfit wys god and a stable
Why han ye wrought / this werk unresonable
ffor by this werk / south / north / ne west / ne est /
Ther nys yfostred / man ne bryd ne best /
It doth no good to my wit / but anoyeth
See ye nat lord / how mankynde it destroyeth
An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
Han wolfes slayn / al be they nat in mynde
Which mankynde / is so fair part of thy werk /
That thou it madest / lyk to thyn owene merk /
Thanne semes it / ye hadde a grete chierte
Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it bee
That ye swiche meenes make / it to destroyen
Swiche meenes do no good / but evele anoyen
¶ Wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste
By argumentz / that al is for the beste
Thogh I can the causes nat yknowe
But thilke god / that made wynd to blowe
As kepe myn lord / this my conclusion
To clerkes lete I / al this disputision
But wolde god / that alle thise wolfes blake
Were dreynt in helle for his sake

Frankeleyn &c

These wordes / clerk lyn herde fro the feere
Thus ended she certyn / & many a pitous teere
Thy fleedes eeke / that it was no disport /
To power by the ee / but disconfort /
And shopen for to pleyen / or elles
They leden hy / by stynteyes and by welles
And eek / in other places delitables
They daunten / and they pleyen at ches and tables
So on a day / right in the morwe tyde
Un to a gardyn / that was they-by-syde
In which / that they hadde made hy-ordinance
Of vitaille / and of other purueiance
They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day
And this was / in the sexte morwe of may
Which may hadde peynted / with his softe shoures
This gardyn / ful of leues and of flowres
And craft of mannes hand so curiously
Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely
That neuer / was there gardyn of swich prys
But if it were / the verray paradys
The odour of flowres / and the fresshe sighte
Sholde han maked / any herte lighte
That euer was born / but if to greet sikenesse
Or to greet sorwe / helde it in distresse
So ful it was / of beautee / with plesance
At after-dyner / gonne they to daunce
And synge also / save Dorigen allone
Which made alwey hir complaint & hir moone
For she ne sawgh hym / on the daunce go
That was hir housbonde / and hir love also
But nathelees / she moste a tyme abyde
And with good herte / lete hir sorwe slyde
Up on this daunce / amonges other men
Daunced a squier / biforn Dorigen
That fressher was / and jolyer of array
As to my doom / than is the monthe of may
He songeth / daunceth / passynge any man
That is / or was / sith pt the world bigan
Therto he was / if men sholde hym discryve
Oon of the beste farynge man on lyve
Yong / strong / right vertuous / and riche & wys
And well biloued / and holden in greet prys
And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal
Unwityng / of this Dorigen at al
This lusty squier / servant to Venus
Which that ycleped was Aurelius
Hadde loued hir / best of any creature
Two yeer and moore / as was his aventure

¶ Franckeleyn ~

But neuē dorste he tellen hym his greuance
Withouten coppe / he dranke al his penance
he was desperyed / no thyng dorste he seye
Save in his songes / somwhat wolde he wreye
his wo / as in a general complaynyng /
he seyde he louede / and was biloued no thyng /
Of swich matere / made he many layes
songes / complaintes / roundels / virelayes
how that he dorste nat his sorwe telle
But langwissheth / as a furye dooth in helle
And dye he moste he seyde / as dode Ekko
for narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo
In oothey manere / than ye heere me seye
Ne dorste he nat / to hym his wo bywreye
Save that pryentyme / somtyme at daunces
Ther yong folk / kepen hir obseruaunces
It may wel be / he looked on hir face
In swich a wise / as man pt asketh grace
But no thyng wiste she / of his entente
Natheles / it happed er they thennes wente
Pat / cause / that she was his neighebour
And was a man / of worshipe and honour
And hadde yknowen hym / of tyme yoore
They fille in speche / and forth moore and moore
Unto this purpos / thorugh Aurelius
And whan he saugh his tyme / he seyde thus
¶ Madame quod he / by god pt this sorwe
So that I wiste / it myghte yow nat plese
I wolde that day / that youre aller lyves
Were in youre yen / that I Aurelius
Hadde right nought / I nolde han comen agayn
for wel I woot / my seruyce is in vayn
My guerdon is / but brestyng of myn herte
Madame / reweth vpon my peynes smerte
for with a word / ye may me slen or saue
Heere at youre feet / god wolde pt I were grave
I ne have as nowe / no leyser moore to seye
Have mercy swete / or ye wolde me deye
She gan to looke / vpon Aurelius
Is this youre wyl quod she and sey ye thus :
Nay dame quod he / god forbede I myghte
But nowe Aurelie / I knowe youre entente
By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf
Ne shal I nevere / been vntrewe wyf
In word ne werk / as fer as I haue wit
I wol been his / to whom pt I am knyt
Take this for fynal answere / as of me
But after that / in pley thus seyde she

¶ Hereth a mervaylle ~

Amelie quod she / by heighe god above
yet wolde I graunte yowe / to been youre love
Syn I yowe se / so pitously complayne
Loke what day / that endelong Iputayne
Ye purchace alle the wowes / stoon by stoon
That they ne lette / ship ne boot to goon
I seye / whan ye han maad / the wost so clene
Of wowes / that they nys no stoon ysene
Thanne wol I / love yowe best of any man
Have heer my trouthe / in al pt ellde I kan
Is they upon oother wyse / in yowe quod he
Nay by that lord quod she that maked me
Forbet I noot / pt it shal neiv bityde
Lat slyche folies / out of youre herte slyde
What seyntee sholde a man / han in his lyf
For to go love / anothey mannes wyf
That hath hir body / whan so pt hym liketh
Anselius / ful ofte sore siketh
So was anselie whan pt he this herde
And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde
Thanne quod he / this seye an impossible
Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible
And with that word / he turned hym anon
This toone / hir otheye freendes many oon
And in the aleyes / romeden up and doun
And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun
But sodeynly / bigonne revel newe
Til that the bigge / orine / slow his hewe
For Phoebus / hath / lost / the orine his light
This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght
And hoom they goon / in joye and in solas
Save only / wel the Anselius allas
He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte
He seeth / he may nat fro his deth asterte
Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde
Up to the heven / his handes he gan holde
And on his knowes bare / he sette hym doun
And in his preyinge / devde his resoun
For wo / his wit / out of his herte he breyde
He nyste / what he spak / but thus he seyde
With pitous herte / his pleynt / hath he bigonne
Un to the goddes / and first un to the sonne
He seyde Apollo / god and governour
Of every plesaunce / myne / thee and flour
That yevest after / thy declinacion
To ech of hem / his tyme and his sesoun
As thyn herbergh / chaungeth lowe or heighe
Lord Phebus / cast thy merciable eyghe

The complaint of Anselius to the goddes and to the sonne

Frankeleyn

O wrecche Amelie / which am but lorn
so lord / my lady hath my deth y sworn
with oute gilt / but thy beningnytee
upon my bisy heste / have compassion
for wel / woot lord phebus / if yow lest
ye may me helpen / save my lady best
Now woucheth sauf / pt / may yow devyse
how pt / may been holpen / and in what wyse
your blisful suster / Lucina the sheene
That of the see / is chief goddesse and queene
Though Neptunus / have deitee in the see
yet empyre / above hym is she
ye knowen wel lord / that right as hir desir
is to be quyked / and lightned of youre fir
for which / she folweth yow / ful bisily
right / so / the see desireth naturelly
To folwen hir / as she that is goddesse
both in the see / and rivieres moore and lesse
wherfore lord phebus / this is my requeste
do this miracle / or do myn heste heste
That now next / at this opposicion
which in the signe / shal be of the leon
as prayeth hir / so greet a flood to bringe
That fyve fadme at the leeste it overspringe
the hyeste rokke / in armorik / Britayne
And let this flood / endure yeres tweyne
That same ches / to my lady may / I seye
holdeth youre heste / the rokkes been aweye
lord phebus / doth this miracle for me
prayeth hir / she go no faster comys than ye
I seye / prayeth youre suster / that she go
no faster comys than ye / thise yeres two
That same shal she been / evene atte fulle alday
And spring flood / laste both nyght and day
And but she vouche sauf / in such manere
To graunte me / my soverayn lady deere
prey hir / to synken every rok adoun
In to hir owene derke regioun
under the ground / ther pluto dwelleth pryme
Or nevere mo / shal I my lady clymme
Ther temple in delphos / kal / bayfoot seke
lord phebus / se the teres on my cheke
And of my peyne / have som compassioun
And with that word / in swowne she fil adoun
And longe tyme / she lay forth in a traunce
his brother / which pt / knew of his penaunce
Up caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym brought
Dispeyred / in this torment / and this thought

Tffranckeleyn to

Lete I this Cosin creature lye
Chese he for me Ether he wol lyue or dye
A nyghtes With heele and goed hoo
as he pt was of thyrtalyne the flour
Is comen hoom and other worthy men
O blisful artow nowe thou dongen
That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes
The fresshe knyght the worthy man of armes
That louyeth thee as his owene hertes lyf
No thyng list hym to been ymaginatyf
If any wight hadde spoke whil he was oute
To hise of hom he hadde of it no doute
He nought entendeth to no swich matere
But daunceth Iusteth maketh hym good cheere
And thus in ioye and blisse I lete hem dwelle
And of the sike Arcite wol I telle
How longe and in torment lyueth
How yeer and moone lith Emelyus
Er any foot he myghte on erthe goon
Ne comfort in this tyme hadde he noon
Save of his brother which pt was a clerk
He knew of al this wo and al this werk
For to noon other creature certeyn
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn
Under his brest he bar it moore secree
Than euer dide Pamphilus for Galathee
His brest was hool Without for to sene
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perilous the cure
Whil men myghte touche the arwe or come therby
His brother wepte and wayled pryuely
Til atte laste him fil in remembrance
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce
As yonge clerkes that been lyke wise
To goon ayer that been curious
Seken in euery halke and euery herne
Particuler sciences for to lerne
He him remembred that vpon a day
At Orliens in studie a book he say
Of magyk naturel which his felawe
That was that tyme a bachiler of lawe
Al were he there to lerne another craft
Hadde pryuely vpon his deske ylaft
Which book spak ful muchel of the operacions
Touchynge the eyghte and twenty mansions
That longen to the moone and swich folye
As in our dayes is nat worth a flye

Pamphilus ad Galatheam Vulliez
et clausum porro sub pectore telum sed

For hooly chyches feith in oure bileue
Me suffreth noon illusion vs to greue
And whan this book was in his remembraunce
Anon for ioye his herte gan to daunce
And to hym self he seyde prively
My brother shal be shamfast hastily
For I am sikey that they be sciences
Sy these men make duuse apparences
Swiche as thise subtile tregetours pleye
For ofte at festes have I wel herd seye
That tregetours within an halle large
Have made come in a water and a barge
And in the halle playen up and doun
Sometyme hath semed come a grym doun
And sometyme flowres springe as in a mede
Sometyme a vyne and grapes white and rede
Sometyme a castel al of lym and stoon
And whan hym lyked voyded it anon
Thus semed it to eny mannes sighte
Now thanne conclude I thus that if I myghte
At Orliens som old felawe yfynde
That hadde this moones mansions in mynde
Or other lyk gret clerk I shoulde wel make
My brother han his love
For certes an apparence a clerk may make
To mannes sighte that alle the rokkes blake
Of Gerunde were yvoyded everichon
And shippes by the brynke comen and gon
And in swich forme endure a fourtenight or two
Thanne were my brother shamfast of his do
Thanne moste she nedes holden hyr biheste
Or elles she shal shame hyr atte leeste
What sholde I make a longer tale of this
Un to his brotheres bed he comen is
And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
To Orliens that he up stirte anon
And on his way forthward thanne is he fare
In hope for to been lasse of his care
Whan they were come almoost to that citee
But er he were at a litel forlong or three
A yong clerk romynge by hym self they mette
Which that in latyn thikke gan he grette
And after this he seyde a wonder thyng
I knowe wel he the cause of youre comyng
And er they ferther any foote yeede
He told hem al that was in hyr conseite
This conning clerk hym askes of felawes
The whiche that he was knowe in olde dawes

And he answerde hym / that they dede wele
for which / he koep ful ofte many a teere
Doun of his hors / Anelius lighte anon
And with his wyf gan / forth is he gon
hoom to his hous / and maden hem ful atese
hem lakked no vitaille / pt myghte hem plese
So ful alwayes hous / as they was oon
Anelius in his lyf / slaugh nevere noon
He sheked hym / er he wente to soupeer
Foreestes / parkes / ful of wilde deer
They saugh he hertes / with hir hornes hye
The gretteste / that ever yeye sayn with eye
He saugh of hem / an hondred slayn with houndes
And somme with arwes blede / of bittre woundes
He saugh / whan voyded weye thise wilde deer
Thise fawconers / upon a fair rivyer
That with hir haukes / han the heron slayn
Tho saugh he knyghtes / justying / in a pleyn
And after this / he dide hym swich plesaunce
That he hym sheked his lady on a daunce
On which hym self / he daunced / as hym thoughte
And whan this wayfaring / pt this magyk stroughte
Al was tyme / he clapte his handes two
And farewel / al oure jewel was ago
And yet removed they nevere / out of the hous
Whil they saugh / al this sighte marvellous
But in his studie / there as his bookes be
They seten stille / and no wight / but they thre
To hym this wayfarer calles his squyer
And seyde hym thus / is redy oure soper
Almoost an houre it is / I undertake
Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make
Whan that thise worthy men / wenten with me
In to my studie / there as my bookes be
Sire quod this squyer / whan it liketh yow
It is al redy / though ye wol nought now
Abit a while / quod he / as for the beste
This amorous folk / som tyme moote han hir leste
At after soper / fille they in tretee
What somme / sholde this wayfares gerdon be
To remoeven / alle the rokkes of Pantayne
And eek fro mount Pelyoun / to the mouth of Sayne
He made it straunge / and sworn / so god hym save
Lasse than a thousand pound / he wolde nat have
Ne gladly / for that somme he wolde nat goon
Anelius / with blisful herte anoon
Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound
This wyde world / which that men seye is round

¶ Wolde it yeue, if I were lord of it
This bargayn is ful dygne, for we been knyt
ye shal be prayed trewely by my trouthe
But looketh nowt, for no negligence or slouthe
ye tapte se heere no lenger than to morwe
¶ Nay quod this clerk have heer my feith to borwe
¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste
And whel my al that nyght he hadde his leste
What for his labour, and his hope of blisse
His grostul heste of penaunce hadde a lisse
¶ Upon the morwe whan pt it was day
To Britaigne tooke they the nyghte way
Aurelius and this magicien bisyde
And been descended ther they wolde abyde
And this was as thise bookes me remembre
The colde frosty seson of Decembre
Phebus wax old and hewed lyk latoun
That in his hoote declynacion
Shoon as the burnes gold, with stremes bryghte
But now in Capricorn, adoun he lighte
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn
The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn
Destroyed hath the grene, in every yerd
Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd
And drynketh, of his bugle horn the wyn
Biforn hym, stant brawen, of the tusked swyn
And Nowel, cryeth every lusty man
¶ Aurelius, in al that ever he kan
Doth to his mayster, cheere and reverence
And preyeth hym, to doon his diligence
To bringen hym, out of his peynes smerte
Or with a swerd, pt he wolde slitte his herte
¶ This subtil clerk, swich routhe had of this man
That nyght and day, he spedde hym pt he kan
To wayten a tyme, of his conclusion
This is to seye, to maken illusion
By swich a apparence of jogelrye
I ne kan no termes, of astrologye
That she and every wight, sholde wene & seye
That of Britaigne, the rokkes were aweye
Or elles, they were sonken virtey grounde
So atte laste, he hath his tyme yfounde
To maken his japes, and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a superstitious cursednesse
His tables tolletanes forth he brought
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked nought
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeres
Ne his proteres, ne his othere geeres

Janus bicepes

¶ Frankeleyn ~

¶ Alnath dicit quia nullo tempore

¶ In nona hora ~

Has been his wayes, and his argumentz
And his purposinges conuenient
ffor his equacions in euy thyng
And by his .g. hoor in his clymbyng
he knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
ffro the heed of thilke fyr ayen above
Dat in the .9. hoor considered is
ful subtilly he hadde kalkules al this
¶ When he hadde founde his fyfte mansion
he knew the remenaunt by proporcion
And knew the ayrysyng of his moone wel
And in whos face and trine and eyry wel
And knew ful wel the moones mansion
Acordaunt to his operacion
And knew also his other observances
ffor swiche illusions and swiche meschances
As hethen folk used in thilke dayes
ffor which no lenger make we delayes
But thurgh his magik for a tyme or tweye
It semed that alle the rokkes weye aweye
Anyelus which pt yet despeyed is
Whey he shal han his love or fare amys
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle
And whan he knew pt they was noon obstacle
That voyded weye this rokkes everychon
Doun to his maistres feet he fil anon
And seyde ¶ woful wrecche Anyelus
Thanke yow lord and lady myn Venus
That me han holpen fro my cares colde
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde
Where as he knew he sholde his lady see
And whan he sawgh his time anon right hee
With dredful herte and with ful humble cheere
Salewed hath his owene lady deere
¶ My right lady quod this woful man
Whom I most drede and love as I best kan
And lothest were of al this world displese
Nere it pt I for yow have swich disese
That I moste dyen heere at youre foot anon
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon
But certes outher moste I dye or pleyne
ye slee me giltles for verray peyne
But of my deeth thogh pt ye have no routhe
Avyseth yow er pt ye breke youre trouthe
Repenteth yow for thilke god above
Er ye me sleen by cause pt I yow love
ffor wel ye woot what ye han sworn in chirche
Nat pt I chalange any thyng of right

Franklein ꝯ

Of yoꝛ my ꝯdicyon lady / but youꝛ grace
Sut my a gaydyn yond / at ꝙich a place
ye woot ꝛght ꝛeel / ꝙat ye bihighten me
And my myn hand / youe trouthe plighten ye
To loue me best / god woot ye ꝙyde ꝯ
Al be / pt ye vnworthy am they to
Wyfdame / speke it / for the hond of yoꝛ
Wooꝛe than to ꝙame / myn hestes ſyf ꝛght nor
I haue do ſo / as ye comanded me
And if ye woucke ſauf / ye may go ſee
Both as yoꝛ lift / haue youꝛ biheſte my mynde
ffoꝛ quyte oꝛ dede / ꝛght they ye ſhal me fynde
In yoꝛ lith al / to do me liue oꝛ deye
But ſel I woot / the roſes been aweye

He taketh his leue / and ſhe aſtoned ſtood
In al hyꝛ face / nas a deꝙe of blood
She wende nede han come my ꝙich a trappe
Allas ꝙuod ſhe / pt euel this ſholde happe
ffoꝛ wende I nede / by poſſibilitee
That ꝙich a wonſtre / oꝛ monelle myghte bee
It is agayns the proces of nature
And hoom ſhe goth / a ſoꝛꝛeful creature
ffoꝛ verray feere / vnnethe may ſhe go
She ſyketh ſaylleth / al a day oꝛ two
And ſwowneth / that it pouthe reas to ſee
But why it was / to no ꝛght tolde ſhee
ffoꝛ out of toune / was goon anoneſagus
But to hyꝛ ſelf / ſhe ſpak and ꝙyde thus
With face pale / and eyꝛ ful ſoꝛꝛeful cheere
In hyꝛ complaynt / as ye ſhal after heere

Allas ꝙuod ſhe / on thee ffoꝛtune I pleyne
That vnkay / eſcapes haſt me my thy cheyne
ffoꝛ ſwhich teſcape / woot I no ſcorn
Save oonly / deeth oꝛ diſhonoury
Oon of thiſe two / bihoueth me to cheſe
But nathelees / yet haue I ſelde to leſe
my lif / thaw of my body haue a ſhame
Oꝛ knowe my ſelven falſe / oꝛ leſe my name
And with my deth I may be quyt ywis
Hath they nat / many a noble wyf ek thus
And many a mayde / yſlayn hyꝛ ſelf alias
Rather / than eyꝛ hyꝛ body don trespas

Lo thus ſeyde / to thiſe ſtoꝛies beyen ſtidfaſt
Thaw .xxx. tyraunts / ful of cruſtedneſſe
Hadde ſlayn Philoun / in athenes at feſte
They comaunded / hiſe doghtres foꝛ to reſte
And bifoꝛn ſem in deſpit
Al naked / to fulfille hyꝛ foul delit

The complaynt of Doꝛigene ayeyns ffoꝛtune

Do athenen ſin tyran cu ꝓhisonem-
neciſſet in cubiculo filias ei ꝙ nigres
ad ſe ꝙeri ſe miſerit z croꝛtoꝛ moꝛe in
dam ac cuꝑ pamenta pat̃ ſanguine
cruentatas in ꝙsicis geſtibus
ſuis eſſe / ꝙe paulisꝑ diſſimulato do
loꝛe cu tumultuoſos comites ſuos ꝓsent
ꝙasi ad ꝛequiſita natiue egredien-
tes nunccm ſe complexe ꝓpinquis
mit in puteꝫ ut ꝙ ignominiam
moꝛte depulſerit

Franklein

And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
Upon the pauement god yeue hem myschaunce
ffor which these cursed maydens ful of vyce
Fathey than they wolde lese hir maydenhede
They ful ofte been shut in to a celle
And seynte hem selven as the bookes telle
They of ryecene sleete emprise and seke
Of lacedonye fifty maydens eke
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye
But non was they noon of al that compaignye
That ose was slayn and eke a good entente
Ches fathey for to dye than assente
To been oppresse of hir maydenhede
Ther wolde I thanne to dye been in drede
To eek the tyraunt Anstoclides
That lones a maydeu heet Stymphalides
Than that hir fadey slayn was on a nyght
Un to Dianes temple goth she right
And hente the ymage in hir handes two
ffro which ymage wolde she nede go
Ne right ne nyghte hir handes of it arace
Til she was slayn right in the selue place
Clerk oth pt maydens hadden ofich despit
To been defoules with mannes foul delit
Del ogh te a lyf fathey hir selven slee
Than be defoules as it thynketh me
What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf
That at daytage birafte hir self hir lyf
ffor whan she sawgh that Romayns wan the toun
She took hir children alle and skipte adoun
In to the fyr and chees fathey to dye
Than any Romayn dide hir vilenye
Ath nat lucresse yslayn hir self alias
At Rome whan she oppressed was
Of Tarquyn for hir thoughte it was a shame
To liuen whan she has lost hir name
The seuene maydens of ryeleste also
Whan slayn hem self for drede and wo
Fathey than folk of Gadle hem sholde oppresse
Ne than a thousand stories as I gesse
Konde I now telle as touchynge this matere
Whan Habradate was slayn his wyf so dere
Hir selven stroke and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates wounde depe and wyde
And seyde myn body at the leeste way
They shal no wight defoulen if I may
That sholde I nin exemples heer of seyn
Sith that so manye han hem selven slayn

¶ Frankeleyn &c

Wel rather than they wolde defoules be
¶ wol conclude, that it is bet for me
To sleen my self than been defoules thus
¶ wol be trewe vn to Amelagus
Or rather sleen my self in oon maneye
As dide Demociones doghter deye
Hy cause pt she wolde nat defoules be
Lucasius it is ful greet pitee
To reden hou thy doghter deyde allas
That slowe hem self for swich maneye cas
Es greet a pitee was it or wel moore
The Theban maydeu that for Nichanore
Hir selven slowe right for swich maneye so
Another Theban maydeu, dide right so
For oon of macedoyne hadde hir oppressed
She with hir body hir maydenhede kepte
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf
That for swich cas bireafte hir self hir lyf
Or trewe eek was to Alcebiades
His love rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body vnburyed be
O which a wyf was Alceste quod she
What seith Omer of goode Penalopee
Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee
Lo Adee of macedoyne is writen thus
That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselay
Hir lemman wolde she lyve after his day
The same of noble Porcia telle I may
With oute wordes moore she nat dyde
To shewe she hadde al hool hir herte yeve
To hir first housbonde Brutus hir lief
Hou thogh al the Babane Lucresses wyf
Lucrece queene thy wyfly chastitee
To alle wyves may a mirour bee
She slow hir self I seye of Sirye
Valerie of Vosogone and eek Valerie
Thus pleyne dorigene a day or tweye
Purposynge ese that she wolde deye
But nathelees vpon the thridde nyght
Hom cam Amelagus this worthy knyght
And asked hir why that she weep so soore
And she gan wepen eke lenger the moore
Alias quod she that eke I was born
Thus have I seyd quod she thus have I sworn
And told hym al as ye han herd bifore
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore
This housbonde with glad chiere in freendly wyse
Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse

¶ Penociones apopagitay pna
ns virgo filia &c ~ ~ ~

¶ Quo ore laudande erunt Lesa
si filie &c ~ ~ ~ ~

¶ Nichanor victis Thebis cum
captie virginis amore stupat &c ~

¶ Clarant scriptores Greci & alia
Thebanam virginem &c ~ ~

¶ Quis loquax lucretiã coniuge
pie ipudice nisi vir mortẽ &c

¶ Alcebiades ille doctis versi &c

¶ Alceste fabule fenit p marito
admeto sponte defuncta et
penolopes pudicia Vlixi carmine &c ~

¶ Macedonia quoq; poetay ore
cantat occiso apud troiam
protheselao &c

¶ Porcia cui soluto viue non
potuit ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

¶ Clytemnestra quoq; ore mancoli ni
signis indicijs fuisse phibet &c ~

¶ Tenta semiramis regina &c ~ ~

¶ Ny strato regulus ~ ~ ~

¶ Vidi & omnes pene Babanes ca.
xxvj°. primo ~ ~ ~ ~

¶ Item Cornelia &c ~ ~ ~

¶ Mutent ge nupte Thessalam / Ale
obliciam Corgim Thymodia Clau
dias atq; Corneliãs / ni fine lib primo ~

¶ Singulas has historias & plures have
mulieres considentes legerat beatus
Jeronimus cont Jouinianum in primo li
bro ca°. 39°. ~

Franklein

Is there ogȝt elles Dorigen but this :
Nay nay quod she god helpe me so as wys
This is to muche and it were goddes wille
Ye wyf quod he lat slepen that is stille
It may be wel paventure yet to day
Ye shul youre trouthe holden by my fay
For god so wisly have mercy upon me
I have wel leuere ystiked for to be
For verray loue which that I to you have
But if ye sholde youre trouthe kepe I save
Trouthe is the hyeste thyng pt man may kepe
But ek pt that word he hast anon to kepe
And bide I you forbede up peyne deeth
That neuer shul thee lasteth lyf ne breeth
To no wight telle thou of this auenture
As I may best I wol my wo endure
Ne make no contenaunce of heuynesse
That folk of you may demen harm or gesse
And forth he clepes a squier and a mayde
Goth forth anon with Dorigen he sayde
And bryngeth hym to swich a place anon
They take hir leue and on hir way they gon
But they ne wiste why she thider went
He nolde no wight telleu his entente
Auenture an heep of yore ygon
Wol holden hym a lewed man in this
That he wol putte his lyf in iupartie
Forkneth the tale er ye vpon hym crie
She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth
And than pt ye han hem the tale demeth
This squier which pt highte Aurelius
On Dorigen that was so amorus
Of auenture happed hym to meete
Amydde the toun right in the quykkest strete
As she was boun to goon the way forth right
Toward the gardyn there as she had sight
And he was to the gardynward also
For wel he spyed when she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any manere place
But thus they metten of auenture or grace
And he salueth hyr with glad entente
And asked of hyr whiderward she wente
And she answerde half as she were mad
Un to the gardyn as myn housbonde bad
My trouthe for to holde alas alas
Aurelius gan wondren on this cas
And in his herte hadde great compassion
Of hyr and of hyr lamentacion

¶ Thus of Arueragus the worthy knyght
That was hym holden al yᵗ ore was right
So longe hym was his wyf ore wolde breke hir trouthe
And in his herte he caughte of this greet youthe
Consideryinge the beste on euery syde
That fro his lust yet were hym leuer abyde
Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
Agayns fraunchise and alle gentillesse
For which in feere wordes seyde he thus
¶ Madame seyeth to youre lord Arueragus
That sith I se his grete gentillesse
To yow and eek I se wel youre distresse
That fyn were lene hym shame and yᵗ were youthe
Than ye to me wolde breke thus youre trouthe
I haue wel leuere euere to suffre wo
Than I departe the loue betwix yow two
I yow release madame ryn to youre honde
Quyt euery seuerte and euery bonde
That ye han maad to me as heer biforn
Sith thilke tyme which yᵗ ye were born
My trouthe I plighte I shal yow neuer repreue
Of no biheste and here I take my leue
As of the trewheste and the beste wyf
That euere yet I knewe in al my lyf
But euery wyf be war of hire biheeste
On wrongeue wenyeth atte leeste
Thus can a squier doon a gentil dede
As wel as can a knyght withouten drede
¶ She thanketh hym upon hir knees al bare
And doon vn to hir housbonde is she fare
And tolde hym al as ye han herd me sayd
And be ye siker he was ful wel apayd
That it were impossible me to wryte
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte
¶ Arueragus and Dorigene his wyf
In ioueyn blisse leden forth hir lyf
Neuer eft ne was there angre hem bitweene
He cherisseth hire as though she were a queene
And she was to hym trewe for euermoore
Of thise two folk ye gete of me namoore
Aurelius that his cost hath al forlorn
Cursyth the tyme yᵗ ever he was born
Allas quod he allas that I bihighte
Of pured gold a thousand pound of wighte
Vn to this philosophre how shal I do
I se namoore but that I am foredo
Myn heritage moot I nedes selle
And been a beggere heere my I nat dwelle

Franklein

And shauen al my thynge in this place
But I of hym may gete better grace
But natheles I wole of hym assaye
At eyen dayes yeer by yeer to paye
And thanke hym of his gete curteisye
My trouthe wol I kepe I wol nat lye
With hepte ooz he gooth vn to his coffe
And bioghte gold vn to this philosophye
The value of fyue hundred pound I gesse
And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse
To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt
And seyde maister I dar wel make auaunt
I failled neuer of my trouthe as yit
For wikkedly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes yow hold eke that I saye
To goon a begged in my kirtel baye
But wolde ye vouche sauf vp on seuretee
Two yeer or thre for to respiten me
Thanne wolde I wel for elles moot I selle
My fyn heritage there is noon oother to telle
This philosophre sobrely answerde
And seyde thus whan he thise wordes herde
Have I nat holden couenaunt vn to thee ?
Yes certes wel and trewely quod he
Hastow nat have thy lady as thee liketh ?
No no quod he and sorwefully he siketh
What was the cause tel me if thou kan ?
Aurelius his tale anon bigan
And tolde hym al as he han herd bifore
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore
He seyde Arueragus of gentillesse
Hadde leeue thee in sorwe and in distresse
Whan pt his wyf were of hir trouthe fals
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als
How wooth hir was to been a wikked wyf
And pt she leeue had lost that day hir lyf
And pt hir trouthe she sworen thurgh innocence
She nere eyst hadde yeue opene of apparence
That made me han of hir so gret pitee
And right as frely as he sente hir me
As frely sente I hir to hym ageyn
This al and som there is nathoore to seyn
This philosophre answerde leeue brother
Euerich of yow dide gentilly til oother
Thou art a squier and he is a knyght
But god forbede for his blisful myght
But if a clerk hadde doon a gentil deede
As wel as any of yow it is no drede

Sire I releesse thee thy thousand pound
As thou right wolt seye ryght out of the ground
Ne neede ey wolt ne haddest knowen me
For sire I wol nat taken a peny of thee
For al my craft ne nought for my travaille
Thou hast ypayed wel for my vitaille
It is ynogh and fayerwel have good day
And took his hors and forth he goth his way
Lordynges this question thanne wolde I aske now
Which was the moste fre as thynketh yow
Now telleth me ey that ye ferthey kende
Thanne endeth my tale is at an ende

Here is endes the ffranseleyns tale

Here folweth the Physicyens tale

Ther was as telleth Titus Livius
A knyght that was called Virginius
ffulfild of honour and of worthynesse
And stronge of frendes and of grete richesse
This knyght a doghtey hadde by his wyf
No childeren hadde he mo in al his lyf
ffair was this mayde in excellent beautee
Aboven ech wight that man may see
For nature hath with soleyn diligence
Yformed hyr in so greet excellence
As though she wolde seyn I am nature
Thus kan I forme and peynte a creature
Whan that me list who kan me countrefete
Pygmalion nought though he ay forge and bete
Or grave or peynte for I dar wel seyn
Apelles zanzis sholde werche in veyn
Outher to grave or peynte or forge or bete
If they presumed me to countrefete
For he that is the formeyr principal
Hath maked me his vicaire general
To forme and peynten erthely creatures
Right as me list and ech thyng in myn cure is
Under the mone pt may wane and waxe
And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe
Thy lord and I been ful of oon accord
I made hym to the worshyp of my lord
So do I alle myne othere creatures
What colour that they han or what figures

Ovide in ymethamorphoseos

Apelles fecit mirabile opus in
timulo dam Venere et Alexandro
rio. I°. de Zanzi in ri°. Italie

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+

Thus semeth me / that Nature sholde seye
This mayde of age · xij · yeer was and weye
In which pt Nature hadde swich delit
ffor right as she kan peynte a lilie whit
And rees a Rose / right swich pt swich peyntinge
She peynted hath this noble creatinge
Ey she seye born / vp on hir lymes fre
Sheye as by right / swiche tolouns sholde be
And Phebus dyed hath his tresses greete
lyk to the streemes / of his burned heete
And if pt excellent / was hir beautee
A thousand fold moore vertuous was she
In hire / ne lakked no condicioun
That is to preyse / as by discrecioun
As wel in goost as body / chast was she
ffor which she flowed in virginitee
With alle humylitee / and abstinence
With alle attempraunce and patience
With meekenesse eek / of berying / and array
Discreet she was in answering alway
Though she were wise pallas dar I seyn
Hir facound eek / ful womanly & pleyn
No countrefetes termes / hadde she
To seme wys but after hir degree
She spak / and alle hir wordes moore & lesse
Sowning in vertu / and in gentillesse
Shamefast she was maydens shamefastnesse
Constant in herte / and evene in bisynesse
To wynne hir out of ydel slogardye
Ententif hadde of hir mouth / ay no malvestye
ffor youthe and youthly / wordes veniel
As many in hyr / wol lasten ofte ful wikkes
And of hir owene vertu / unconscience
She hath ful ofte tyme syk hir feyned
ffor that she sholde flee the compaignye
Ther lykly was to treten of folye
As is at festes / revels / and at daunces
That been occasions of daliaunces
Swich thyng / maken children for to be
To soone ripe and bold / as men may se
Which is ful perilous / and hath been yoore
ffor al to soone may they lerne loore
Of boldnesse / than a woman is a wyf
And ye maistresses in youre olde lyf
That lordes doghtres han in gouvernance
Ne taketh of my wordes no displesance
Thenketh that ye been set in governinges
Of lordes doghtres / oonly for three thynges

Outhey for ye han kept youre honestee
Or elles ye han falle vnfeletee
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce
And han forsaken fully ech[e] meschaunce
ffor ententif therfore for Cristes sake
To teche hem vtu looke pt ye ne slake
A theef of venyson that hath forlaft
his likerousnesse and al his olde craft
kan kepe a forest best of any man
Nought kepeth wel for if ye wole ye kan
looke wel pt ye vn to no vice assente
lest ye be dampnee for youre likke entente
ffor who so dooth a traitour is certeyn
And taketh kepe of that pt[e] shal ensyn
Of alle tresons conveyin pestilence
Is clepid a knight bitrayseth innocence
The fadres and ye moodres eek also
Though ye han children be it oon or two
youre is the charge of al hir ensurance
while pt they been vndir youre governance
Beth war if by ensample of youre lyvynge
Or by youre negligence vn chastisynge
That they fisse for[e] day wel eyre
yf pt they doon ye shul it deere abeye
Vndir a shepherde softe and negligent
The wolf hath many a sheep and lamb to reent
his mayde of which a wol this tale expresse
So kepte hir self hir nedes no maistresse
ffor in hir lyvynge maydens myghten rede
As in a book every good word or dede
That longeth to a maydem vertuous
She was so prudent and so bountevous
ffor which the fame out sprong on every syde
Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde
That thurgh that land they preised hir echone
That loved vertu save envye allone
That sory is of oothers wele and glad is of his harde and his vnhele
The bokeler maketh this description
This mayde dwelt in a litel toun
Ful fat a temple with hir moodir deere
As is of yonge maydens the manere
Nought was they thanne a justice in that toun
That governour was of that regioun
And so bifel this juge his eyen caste
Vp on this mayde auysynge hir ful faste
As she cam forby they as this juge stood
Anon his herte chaunged and his mood

Augustinus

¶ So was he caught with beautee of this mayde
And to hym self ful pryuely he sayde
This mayde shal be myn for any man
Anon the feend ⁊ to his herte pan
And taughte hym sodeynly ꝑt he by slyghte
The mayden to his purpos hyme myghte
For certes by no force ne by no meede
hym thoughte he was nat able for to speede
For she was strong of frendes and eek she
Confermed was ⁊ with swich sodayn beautee
That welbe wiste he myghte hir nevere hyme
As for to maken hir with hir body synne
For which by greet deliberacion
He sente after a cherl was in the toun
Which ꝑt he knew for subtil and for boold
This juge un to this cherl his tale hath toold
In secree wise and made hym to ensure
He sholde telle it to no creature
And if he dide he sholde lese his heed
Whan ꝑt assented was this cursed reed
Glad was this juge ⁊ maked hir greet cheere
And yaf hym yiftes ꝓfouse and deere
¶ Whan shapen was al hir conspiracie
Fro point to point how ꝑt his lecherie
Ffounded sholde been ful subtilly
As ye shul heere it after openly
Hoom gooth the cherl ꝑt highte Claudius
This false juge that highte Apius
So was his name for this is no fable
But knowen for historial thyng notable
The sentence of it sooth is out of doute
This false juge gooth nedes faste aboute
To haasten his delit al that he may
And so bifel soone after on a day
This false juge as telleth vs the storie
As he was wont sat in his consistorie
And yaf his domes vp on cedyly cas
This false cherl cam forth a ful greet pas
And seyde lord if ꝑt it be youre wille
As dooth me right vp on this pitous bille
In which I pleyne vp on Virginius
And if ꝑt he wol deyn it is nat thus
I wol it preeue and fynde good witnesse
That sooth is that my bille wol expresse
¶ The juge answerde of this in his absence
I may nat yeue diffynytyue sentence
Lat do hym calle and I wol gladly heere
Thou shalt haue al right and no wrong heere

Virginius cam to bite the Juges bille
And right anon was jad this cursed bille
The sentence of it was as ye shul heere
To yowe my lord, lyk Apius so deere
Sheweth youre poure seruant Clandius
How that a knyght called Virginius
Agayns the lawe agayn al equitee
Holdeth expres agayn the fyl of me
My seruant. Which pt is my thral by right
Which fro myn hous was stole vp on a nyght
Whil pt she was ful yong this dot I preeue
By witnesse lyk so pt it nat yowe greeue
She nys his doghter nat that so he seye
Wherfore to yowe my lord the Juge I preye
Yeld me my thral if pt it be youre wille
To this was al the sentence of his bille
Virginius gan vp on the cheyl biholde
But hastily ne wiste his tale tolde
And wolde haue preeued it as wolde a knyght
And eek by witnessyng of many a wight
That it was fals that seyde his aduersaire
This cursed Juge wolde no thyng take
Ne heere a word moore of Virginius
But yaf his Juggement and seyde thus
Daun anon this cheyl his seruant haue
Thou shalt no lenger in thyn hous hym saue
Go bryng hym forth and put hym in oure warde
The cheyl shal haue his thral this is a warde
And whan this worthy knyght Virginius
Thurgh sentence of this Justice Apius
Moste by force his deere doghter yeuen
Vn to the Juge in lecherye to lyuen
He gooth hym hoom and sette hym in his halle
And leet anon his deere doghter calle
And with a face ded as asshen colde
Vpon hir humble face he gan biholde
With fadres pitee stikynge thurgh his herte
Al wolde he fro his purpos nat conuerte
Doghter quod he Virginia by thy name
Ther been two weyes outher deeth or shame
That thou most suffre allas pt I was bore
For neede thou desiredest wherfore
To dyen with a swerd or with a knyf
O deere doghter ender of my lyf
Which I haue fostred vp with swich plesaunce
That thou were neuer out of my remembraunce
O doghter which pt art my laste wo
And in my lyf my laste ioye also

The Physicien

O geme of chastite & pacience
Take thou thy deeth for this is my sentence
ffor love and nat for hate thou most be deed
Wyl pitous hand moot smyten of thyn heed
Allas that euere ap nis the say
Thus hath he falsly iugged the today
And tolde hym al the cas as ye biforе
han herd nat nedeth for to telle it moore
Quod this mayde
And eek that creature / she bothe hir armes layde
Aboute his nekke / as she was wont to do
The teres brast out of hir eyen two
And seyde / goode fadey shal I dye
Is there no grace / is there no remedye
Quod she / deere doghter myn quod he
Thanne yif me leyser / fadey myn quod she
Wyl deeth for to compleyne / a litel space
ffor pitee / iape yaf his doghter grace
ffor to compleyne / er he hir clooth allas
And god it woot / no thyng was hir trespas
But for she pan / hir fadey for to see
To welcome hym / with greet solempnitee
And eek that cleerk / that fil a stroukno amon
And after than hir mooderwyng / is agon
She riseth up / and to hir fadey sayde
Blissed be god / that I shal dye a mayde
yif me myn deeth / er that I have a shame
Dooth eek youre thral / youre lyl agodes name
And with that word / she preyed hym ful ofte
That with his knyf / he wolde smyte softe
And eek that word / a swoune down she fil
Hir fadey / eek ful pitous herte and wil
Hir heed of smoot / and by the top it hente
And to the iuge / he gan it to presente
As he sat yet / in doom in consistorie
And whan the iuge it sough / as seith the storie
He was to take hym / and anhange hym faste
But right anon / a thousand peple in thraste
To save the knyght / for routhe and for pitee
ffor knowen was / the falso iniquitee
The peple anon / hath suspect of this thyng
By meneye / of the cherles chalengyng
That it was / by the assent of Apius
They wisten wel / that he was lecherus
ffor thrist / vn to this Apius they gon
And caste hym in a prison right anon
There as he slow hym self / and Virginius
That oeuiant was / vn to this Apius

Dolcarie Dibaker Podingwright
Pardner-Gaubner

And semes / for to hange vpon a tree
But that Virginius / of his pitee
So preyde for hym / that he was exiled /
And elles certes / he has been bigyled /
The iuuenaunt was anhanged moore & lesse
That was consentaunt / of this cursednesse
Heere may men seen / how synne hath his mute
With shame / for no man woot / whom god wol wyte
In no degree / ne in which maner wyse
The world of conscience / may agryse
Of Cristes lyf / thought it so prymee be
That no man / woot they / of but god and he
ffor be he lewed man / or elles lered /
He woot how done / pt he shal been afered /
Therfore / yese yow / this counseil take
ffor saketh synne / er synne yow forsake

Heere endeth the Physiciens tale /

The wordes of the Hoost / to the Physicien and the Pardoner /

Oure Hoost gan to swere as he were wood /
Harrow quod he / by nayles and by blood /
This was a fals cherl and a fals Iustise /
As shamefully deth / as herte may deuyse /
Come to this false Iuge / and hyr Aduocatz /
Algate / this selly mayde / is slayn allas /
Allas / to deere boughte ther beautee /
Therfore I seye / alday / as men may see /
That yiftes of ffortune and of Nature /
Been cause of deth / to many a creature /
Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now /
Men han ful ofte / moore for harm than prow /
But trewely / myn owene maistre deere /
This is / a pitous tale for to heere /
But nathelees / passe ouer / is no force /
I pray to god / so saue thy gentil corps /
And eek thyne vyandes / and thy Iuwes /
Thyn yyes / and eek thy Talones /
And euery boyste / ful of thy letuarie /
God blesse hem / and oure lady seint Marie /
So moot I theen / thou art a propre man /
And lyk a prelat / by seint Pompan /
Seyde I nat wel / I kan nat speke in terme /
But wel I woot / thou doost myn herte to erme /

That I almoost have caught a Cardynacle
By cokkes bones but I have tynacle
Or elles a Flaunghte of moyste and cornyl also
Or but I heere anon a myrie tale
Wyn heyte is lost for pitee of this mayde
Thou beelamy thou Somey he sayde
Telle us oon myrthe or iapes right anon
It shal be doon quod he by Seint Ronyon
But first quod he heere at this ale stake
I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake
And right anon the gentils gonne to crye
Nay lat hym telle us of no ribaudye
Telle us oon moral thyng that we may leere
Oon Wit and thanne wol we gladly heere
I graunte ywis quod he but I moot thynke
Vp on oon honeste thyng whil that I drynke

Heere folweth the prologe of the Someys tale

Radix malorum est Cupiditas as Thimotheum. 6o.

Ordynges quod he my chirches whan I preche
I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche
And ryng it out as round as gooth a belle
For I kan al by rote that I telle
My theme is alwey oon and ever was
Radix malorum est Cupiditas
First I pronounce whennes that I come
And thanne my bulles shewe I alle & some
Oure lige lordes seel on my patente
That shelde I first my body to warente
That no man be so boold ne preest ne clerk
Me to destourbe of Cristes holy werk
And after that thanne telle I forth my tales
Bulles of popes and of Cardynales
Of patriarkes and bisshopes I shewe
And in latyn I speke a wordes fewe
To saffron with my predicacion
And for to stire hem to devocion
Thanne shewe I forth my longe crystal stones
Ycrammed ful of clowtes and of bones
Relikes been they as wenen they echoon
Thanne have I in latoun a sholdre boon
Which that was of an holy Jewes sheep
Goode men I seye taak of my wordes keep

Yf that this boon be wasshe in any welle
Yf cow or calff or sheep or oxe or welle
That any wom hath ete or wom ystonge
Taak watey of that welle and wassh his tonge
And it is hool anon and for they nuor
Of pokkes and of scabbe and eily oor
Shal eily sheep be hool pt of this welle
Wynketh a draughte taak keep eek that I telle
Yf that the goode man that the beestes oweth
Sol euery dyke ey that the cok hym croweth
Fastynge drynke of this welle a draughte
As thilke holy jewe oure eldres taughte
Hise beestes and his stoor shal multiplie
And eke also it heeleth jalousie
For though a man be falle in jalous rage
Let make with this watey his potage
And nelle shal he moore his wyf mystriste
Though he the soothe of hir defaute wiste
Al has she taken preestes two or thre
Heere is a mytein eek that ye may se
He pt his hand wol putte in this mytayn
He shal haue multiplying of his grayn
Whan he hath sowen be it whete or otes
So pt he offre pens or elles grotes
Goode men and women o thyng warne I yow
Yf any wight be in this chirche now
That hath doon synne horrible pt he
Dar nat for shame of it yshryuen be
Or any woman be she yong or old
That hath ywroght his housbonde cokewold
Swich folk shal haue no power ne no grace
To offren to my relikes in this place
And who so fyndeth hym out of swich blame
They wol come up and offre on goddes name
And I assoille hem by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle ygraunted was to me
By this gaude have I wonne yeer by yeer
An hundred mark sith I was pardoner
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet
And whan the lewed peple is down yset
I preche so as ye han herd bifore
And telle an hundred false japes moore
Thanne peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke
And est and west upon the peple I bekke
As doth a dowve sitthynge on a berne
Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne
That it is joye to se my bisynesse
Of auarice and of swich cursednesse

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Als al my ꝓchyng/ for to make hem flee
To yeuen hir pens/ and namely vn to me
ffor myn entente/ is nat but for to Cryme
And no thyng/ for conuccion of synne
I wolde nenese/ Chan they been beryes
Though ꝑt hir soules/ goon a blakeberyes
ffor testes/ many a ꝓdicacion
Couth ofte tyme/ of yuel entencion
Som for plesance of folk/ and flateryse
To been auanced/ by ypocrisye
And som for veyne glorie/ and som for hate
ffor Chan I day noon oothey Cheyes debate
Thanne Kol I stynge hym/ ek my tonge smyte
In ꝓchyng/ so that he shal nat astyte
To been defamed falsly/ if that he
hath trespased to my brethren/ or to me
ffor though I telle noght his ryght name
men shal wel knowe/ that it is the same
By signes/ and by othere circumstances
Thus quyte I folk/ that doon vs displesances
Thus spitte I out my venym/ vndey Cheke
Of hoolynesse/ to semen hooly and meke
But shortly myn entente I wol devyse
I ꝓche of no thyng/ but for couertyse
Therfore my theme is yet/ and euere was
Radix malorum est Cupiditas
Thus kan I ꝓche/ agayn that same vice
Which ꝑt I vse/ and that is auarice
But though my self be gilty in that synne
yet kan I maken/ oothey folk to Cwynne
ffro auarice/ and soore to repente
But that is nat/ my principal entente
I ꝓche no thyng/ but for couetise
Of this matere/ it oghte ynogh suffise
Thanne telle I hem/ ensamples many oon
Of olde stories/ longe tyme agoon
ffor lewed peple/ loven tales olde
Swiche thynges/ kan they wel reporte & holde
What ioolde ye/ the Chiles I may ꝓche
And Cwynne gold and silver/ for I teche
That I wol lyve in ꝑoure Cilfully
Nay nay/ I thoghte it nedde hertely
ffor I wol ꝓche/ and beggе in sondry landes
I wol nat do no labour/ with myne handes
Ne make baskettes/ and lyve they by
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly
I wol noon of the Apostles counterfete
I wol haue moneie/ wolle chese and Cheete

Lo here it yeuen of the pondefte page
Or of the pondefte fyddle in a village
al holde hy childeren ofepne for faminge
Pray & God fende alcony of the dyne
and hane a holy benthe in euery toun
But herkneth lordynges in conclufioun
Youre likyng is that I fhal telle a tale
Now hane I dronke a draughte of corny ale
By god & hope I fhal you telle a thyng
That fhal by reson been at youre likyng
For though my felf be a ful vitious man
A moral tale yet I you telle kan
Which I am wont to preche for to fhynne
Now holde youre pees my tale I forbigynne

Here bigynneth the Pardoners tale

In flaundres whilom was a compaignye
Of yonge folk that haunteden folye
As riot hafard ftywes and tauernes
Where as with harpes lutes and gyternes
They dannce and pleyen at dees bothe day and nyght
And eten alfo and drinken ouer hir myght
Thurgh which they doon the deuel facrifise
Within that deueles temple in cursed wise
By fuperfluytee abhominable
Hir othes been fo grete and fo damnable
That it is grifly for to here hem fwere
Our blisfed lordes body they to tere
Hem thoughte Iewes rente hym nought ynough
And eek of hem at otheres finne lough
And right anon thanne comen tombesteres
Fetys and fmale and yonge fruitesteres
Singeres with harpes baudes wafteres
Which been the verray deueles officeres
To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye
That is annexed vn to glotonye
The holy writ take I to my witnesse
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse

Lo how that dronken looth vnkyndely
Lay by his doghtres two vnwitingly
So dronke he was he nyfte what he wroghte
Herodes who fo wel the ftories boghte
Whan he of wyn was repleet at his feeste
Right at his owene table he yaf his heeste
To sleen the baptift Johan ful giltelees
Senec with a good hool doutelees

¶ Seneca

¶ Money

He seith he can no difference fynde
Bitwey a man that is out of his mynde
And a man which that is dronkelewe
But that Woodnesse fallen in a shewe
¶ Seneth lengey than dooth dronkenesse
O glotonye ful of cursednesse
O cause first of our confusion
O original of our damnacion
Til Crist hadde bought vs Et his blood again
Lo how deep dortly for to sayn
Abought Was thilke cursed vilenye
Corrupt Was al this World for glotonye
¶ Adam our fadey and his Wyf also
ffro paradys to labour and to Wo
Wepe wynen for that vice it is no drede
ffor Whil p^t adam fasted as I rede
he Was in paradys and Whan p^t he
Et of the fruyt deffended on the tree
Anon he Was out cast to Wo and peyne
O glotonye on thee Wel ought vs pleyne
O Wiste a man how manye maladyes
ffolwen of excesse and of glotonyes
he Wolde been the more mesurable
Of his diete sittynge at his table
allas the shorte throte the tendre mouth
Maketh p^t Est & West and north & South
In Erthe in Eir in Water man to swynke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drynke
Of this matiere o paul Wel kanstow trete
Mete vnto Wombe and Wombe eek vnto mete
Shal god destroyen bothe as paulus seith
Allas a foul thyng is it by my feith
To seye this Word and fouler is the deede
Whan man so drynketh of the Wyn and wede
That of his throte he maketh his privee
Thurgh thilke cursed custumee
¶ The apostel Weping seith ful pitously
They walken many of Whiche yow told have I
I seye it now Weping with pitous voys
They been enemys of Cristes croys
Of Whiche the ende is deeth Wombe is hir god
O Wombe o belly o stynkyng cod
ffulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun
At bothe endes of thee foul is the soun
How great labour and cost is thee to fynde
Thise cookes how they stampe and streyne and grynde
And turnen substaunce in to accident
To fulfillen al thy likerous talent

¶ Esta Deus p Deum estis
Deus ante Christ nulla Deitas

¶ Heu Deus omnium quam dira
Peccatum Adam in paradiso fuit
Comedit & eius p^e status Dignit Deum

¶ Phil. 3°.

Out of the harde bones knocke they
The mary for they caste nought a wey
That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote
Of spicerye of leef and barke and roote
Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit
To make hym yet a newe appetit
But certes he that haunteth swiche delices
Is dede whil pt he lyueth in tho vices

A lecherous thyng is wyn and dronkenesse
Is full of stryuyng and of vnclennesse
O dronke man disfigured is thy face
Sour is thy breeth foul artow to embrace
And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun
As thogh thou seydest ay Sampson Sampson
And yet god woot Sampson drank ne knew no wyn
Thou fallest as it were a stynked swyn
Thy tonge is lost and al thyn honeste cure
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discrecion
In whom pt dronke hath dominacion
He kan no conseil kepe it is no drede
Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the rede
And namely fro the white wyn of lepe
That is to selle in fyfty hestes or in crepe
This wyn of Spayne crepeth subtilly
In otherе wynes growyng faste by
Of which there ryseth swich fumositee
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at hoom in chepe
He is in Spayne right at the toune of lepe
Nat at the Rochele ne at Burdeux toun
And thanne wol he seye Sampson Sampson

But herkneth lordes o word I yow preye
That alle the olde aventures assaye
Of victories in the olde testament
Thurgh verray god pt is omnipotent
Were wont in abstinence and in preyere
Looketh the bible and there ye may it leere
Loke Attilla the grete conquerour
Deyde in his slepe in shame and dishonour
Bleedyng ay at his nose in dronkenesse
A capitayn sholde wys in sobrenesse
And over al this avyseth yow right wel
What was comanded vnto lamuel
Nat Samuel but lamuel seye I
Redeth the Bible and fynde it expresly
Of wyn yevyng to hem pt han iustise
Now hoor of this for it may wel suffise

Cum aute in deliciis est viuens mortuus est

Luxuriosa res vinum et contumeliosa ebrietas

Prologus cum sua

¶ Of hasardrye

¶ Poli. li°. i. / ayendacon. e pin
nay materi est alea

¶ Of Idonesse

And nowe I haue spoken of Glotonye
Now wol I youe / declaren hasardrye
Hasard / is verray mooder of lesynges
And of deceite / and cursed forsweringes
Blaspheminge of crist / manslaughtre & wast also
Of catel and of tyme / and forthermo
It is reproeue / and contrayre of honour
For to been holde / a commune hasardour
And euery the lyer / he is of estaat /
The moore / is he holden desolaat /
If that a prynce / useth hasardrye
In alle gouernance and policye
He is as by commune opinion
Yholde the lasse in reputacion
¶ Stilbon / that was a wys embassadour
Was sent to Corynthe / in ful grect honour
Fro lacidonye / to maken hir alliance
And whan he cam hym happed par chance
That alle the gretteste / that weren of that lond /
Playynge at hasard / he hem fond
For which as soone as it myghte be
He stal hym hoom agayn / to his contree
And seyde / they wol nat lese my name
Ne wol nat take on me so grect defame
Youre for to allie / un to none hasardours
Ne sende / to thise folk embassadours
For by my trouthe / me thynketh euere lyke
That a prynce sholde / not haue a vicious fame
In no degree / but as men of hir name
For yf men speke / of vyce or vertue
Knowen it wol / and deemen it in you
And in your port / and in your gouernaunce
Folweth the fame / of pryue and of aperte
Loke who that is / in honour fortunat
Wel ought him / to auyse and to rewle that
Hym of his port / and of his gouernaunce
Of his speche / and eke of his countenaunce
For euere the lasse / lordes wol doon so
The more / wol men speke / of hem bothe two
Hasardours / and pleyers / at dees
Been knowen / as comune as the grees
And who that haunteth / hem / and vseth the game
And is a commune / pleyer / and a hasardour
His name stynketh / as doth the fule myre
Men holden him / the lasse in honour
The more / he is / renomed / parde
Amonges / alle / of vyces / that I kan
Is chief / mayntenour / of dronkenesse
Lo / the Spartan / that Dimnedes hight
Herde of this vyce / a wonder thyng aright
Which that his sone / fordronke was / allas
Upon a day / out of a taverne / in the strete
As that he wente / with his felawes pleye
Cam rolynge / hom / ful of dronken leye
His fader / which that herde / of his folye
Ne spak to him / neyther / good ne vylanye
Whan he hadde / himself / a bed ylayd
And slept / his fille / and hadde / his sleep yprayd
Thanne on the morwe / whan his fader gan vp ryse
He after mete / sente / after his wyse
Alle his olde / frendes / and his neyghebores
And preyde / hem / they sholde / come / and pleye hem there
With his sone / for he / wolde / make game
And pleye / with his sone / and with his name
They come / and wenten / he / hem wolde honoure
And sooth / to seyne / they dronken / lyke a moure
Thanne / spak / this Spartan / to his sone
Thou shalt / anon / my leeve sone / doon
Or elles / I shal / doon / thee / anon
Of alle / the vyces / that I / herde / of thee
Or elles / of the moste / part / by my fey
That thou / hast / been / accused / to me
But sone / anon / thy / faute / I shal / chastise
Thou shalt / anon / assigne / me / the wise
Why / that / men / seyn / in / vyces / thou / hast / been
Or / I / shal / doon / thee / dyen / on / a / pyn
Or / by / the / feith / that / I / to / god / owe
And / whan / his / fader / hadde / spoken / so
This / sone / anon / gan / mekely / and / soft
His / fader / for / to / answere / and / oft
His / wordes / he / conneth / wel / dispose
He / nolde / his / fader / were / in / no / repreve
Of / him / for / his / speche / ne / for / his / lyve
And / seyde / fader / I / am / redy / certeyn
The / wyn / hath / me / bynomen / bothe / my / myn
For / whan / I / thynke / how / men / hath / many / a / wyse
Spoken / of / hasardours / ful / many / a / vyse
And / many / a / repreve / and / many / a / shame
Men / yeve / hasardours / and / many / a / diffame
And / how / that / they / been / holden / in / repreef
For / comunly / a / shrewe / is / a / theef
Thanne / thought / me / that / honest / were / and / lere
To / play / at / dees / and / riche / for / to / be
And / drynke / eek / many / a / draughte / of / wyn
And / lat / the / people / seye / what / hem / lyn
For / drynke / we / see / by / manyfold / preeve
Hath / bothe / causyd / me / to / pleye / and / dreede
Of / verray / force / withouten / resistence
For / the / preeve / also / of / this / sentence
Lo / the / wyn / is / a / commune / enchesour
Of / dees / pleyng / and / of / dronkenesse
And / of / manye / a / mysgovernaunce
Who / so / haunteth / wyn / taverne / or / daunce
And / ginneth / his / youthe / alle / therto / waste
Me / thynketh / by / right / he / may / his / name / chaste
This / is / the / sentence / of / the / philosophre
Wel / ought / a / man / eschue / the / vyces / alle
The / which / he / knoweth / in / a / wight / certeyn
Loke / eek / that / the / king / Demetrius
The / king / of / Partes / as / the / book / seith / us
Sente / him / a / paire / of / dees / of / gold / in / scorn
For / he / hadde / used / hasard / thereforn
For / which / he / wende / his / glorie / or / his / renoun
At / no / value / or / reputacioun
Lordes / may / finden / other / manere / pleye
Honeste / ynough / to / dryve / the / day / awaye
¶ Of obeysynge & of swerynge /
And / ek / I / speke / of / othes / false / and / grete
A / word / or / two / as / olde / bookes / trete
Grect / obeysynge / is / a / thyng / abhominable
And / fals / obeysynge / is / yet / more / reprevable
The / hyghe / god / forbad / obeysynge / at / al
Witnesse / on / mathew / but / in / special
Of / obeysynge / vnto / the / holy / jeremye
Thou / shalt / seye / sooth / thyne / othes / and / nat / lye

¶ Nolite omnino jurare

¶ Jeremie · 4° · Jurabis in
veritate in judicio & justicia

And shewe in doom in boon and eek in nightwisnesse
But ydel shewing is a cursednesse
Bihoold and se that in the firste table
Of heighe goddes heestes honurable
How that the seconde heeste of hym is this
Take nat my name in ydel or amys
So vatheley ho forbedeth eek such shewing
Than homycide or any cursed thing
I seye that as by ordre thus it stondeth
This knowen that his heestes understondeth
How pt the seconde heeste of god is that
And forthey oold I tol thee tello al plat
That vengeance shal nat pten from his hous
That of his othes is to outrageous
By goddes precious heyte and by his nayles
And by the blood of crist that is in haylles
Seuene is myn chaunce and thyn is cink & treye
By goddes armes if thou falsly pleye
This dagger shal thurgh out thyn herte go
This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones two
Forsweryng ire falsnesse homycide
Now for the loue of crist pt for vs alle
Lete youre othes both grete and smale
But sires now wol I tello forthi my tale
Hise riotours thre of whiche I telle
Longe eyst er pmes yong of myn helle
Ther sat hem in a taueme to drynke
And as they sat they herde a belle clynke
Biforn a cors was caried to his graue
That oon of hem gan callen to his knaue
Go bet quod he and axe redily
What cors is this pt passeth heer forby
And looke pt thou reporte his name weel
Sire quod this boy it needeth neuer a deel
It was me toold er ye cam heer two houres
He was pre an old felawe of youres
And sodeynly he was yslayn to nyght
Fordronke as he sat on his benche upright
Ther cam a priue theef men clepeth deeth
That in this contree al the people sleeth
And with his spere he smoot his herte atwo
And went his wey with outen wordes mo
He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence
And maister er ye come in his presence
Me thynketh that it were necessarie
For to be war of swich an aduersarie
Beth redy for to meete him euermoore
Thus taughte me my dame I sey namoore

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Thy seinte mayso seyde this Daunsey
Yse child seith sooth for he hath slayn this yeey
Heime oon a wyld with mo a greet village
Bothe man and woman child & hyne & page
I trowe his habitacion be there
To been anyes greet keyserom it kere
Ey that he dide a man a dishonour
Tye goddes armes quod this Riotour
Is it swich pil with hym for to meete:
I shal hym seke by key and eek by strete
I make auow to goddes digne bones
Herkneth felawes we thre been al ones
Lat ech of vs holde vp his hand til oothey
And ech of vs bicomen otheres brothey
And we shul sleen this falso traytour deeth
He shal be slayn which pt so manye sleeth
Hey goddes digne we it be nyght
Togidres han thise thre hir trouthes plight
To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oothey
As thought he were his owene ybore brothey
And vp they sterte and dronken in this rage
And forth they goon towardes that village
Of which the Daunsey hadde spoke bifore
And many a grisly ooth thanne han they sworn
And Cristes blessed body they to rente
Deeth shal be dees if that they may hym hente
Whan they han goon nat fully half a myle
Right as they wolde han troden ouer a stile
An old man and a poure with hem mette
This olde man ful meekely hem grette
And seyde thus now lordes god yow see
The proudeste of thise riotours three
Answerde again what conforte ye ageyn
Why artow wrooth al forwrapped save thy face
Why lyuestow so longe in so greet age
This olde man gan looke in his visage
And seyde thus for I ne kan nat fynde
A man though pt I walked in to ynde
Neither in Citee nor in no village
That wolde chaunge his youthe for myn age
And therfore moot I han myn age stille
As longe tyme as it is goddes wille
Ne deeth alias ne wol nat han my lyf
Thus walke I lyk a restelees kaityf
And on the ground which is my moodres gate
I knocke with my staf both early and late
And seye leeue moodre leet me in
Lo how I vanysshe flesh and blood and skyn

¶ Bonez

Allas, shal myn bones been at reste
Wooder, with yoke, bolde, and chaunge myn cheste
That in myn chaumbre, longe tyme hath be
Ye for an heyre clokkt, to chappe me
But yet to me, ne kowde nat do that gree
For which, ful pale, and welked is myn face
But eyes to yow, it is no counteysye
To speken, to an old man vileynye
But he trespasse, in word, or elles in dede
In hooly writ, ye may your self wel rede
Agayns an old man, hoor vpon his heed
Ye shulde aryse, wherfore, I yeue yow reed
Ne doeth vn to an old man, noon harm now
Namoore than ye wolde, men did to yow
In age, if that ye so longe abyde
And god bee wt yow, wherso ye go or ryde
I moot go thider, as I have to go
¶ Nay olde thef, by god thou shalt nat so
Ne ryde this covthey, hastou dwy, anon
Thou past nat so lightly, by seint John
Thou spak right now, of thilke tresor ful
That in this cofre, alle oure richesse is hid
Have heer, myn trouthe, as thou art his ferlye
Telle wher he is, or thou shalt it abye
By god, and by the hooly sacrement
For soothly, thou art oon of his assent
To sleen vs yonge folk, thou false theef
¶ Now sires quod he, if pt ye be so leef
To fynde deeth, turne vp this croked wey
For vn that grove, I last him by my fey
Vnder a tree, and there he wole abyde
Noght for youre boost, he wole him no thyng hyde
Se ye that ook, right there ye shal him fynde
God save yow pt bought vs, ageyn mankynde
And yow amende, thus seyde this olde man
And everich of thise riotours ran
Til he cam to that tree, and they, they founde
Of floryns fyne of gold, ycoyned wel vnde
Wel nygh an. viij. bussheles, as hem thoughte
No lenger thanne, after deeth they soughte
But eek of hem, ful glad was of that sighte
For pt the floryns, been so fair and bright
That doun they sette hem, by this precious hoord
The worste of hem, he spak the firste word
¶ Bretheren quod he, take kepe what I seye
Myn wit is greet, though pt I bourde and pleye
This tresor, hath ffortune vn to vs yeven
In myrthe and ioliftee, oure lyf to lyven

¶ Crescam cauuto capite consilio

14r

And lightly as it comith so wol he spende
Ey goddes dignitee who kende
To day, that he sholde han so fayr a grace
But myghte this gold be take fro this place
Homward to myn hous, or elles on to yowes
For wel ye woot, pt al this gold is owes
Thanne kepe he wel myghty felawe
But tweldely, by daye it may not dawe
Wel wolde seyn, pt thef kepe thennes stronge
And for ous oughte tyde, doon us longe
This tresor moste ycaried be by nyghte
As stelthy, and as slyly as it myghte
Wherfore I rede, pt cut among us alle
We drawe, and lat se whom the cut wol falle
And he pt hath the cut, with herte blithe
Shal renne to towne, and that ful swithe
And bringe us bred and wyn ful prively
And two of us, shul kepen subtilly
This tresor wel, and if he wol not tarie
Than it is nyght, we wol this tresor carie
By oon assent, wher as us thinketh best
That oon of hem, this cut broghte in his fest
And bad hym draw, and looke wher it wol falle
And it fil, on the yongeste of hem alle
And forth toward the toun, he wente anon
And also soone, as that he was gon
That oon spak thus, un to that oother
Thow knowest wel, thou art myn owen brother
Thy profit, wol I telle thee anon
Thou woost wel, that our felawe is agon
And herke is gold, and that ful grete plentee
That shal departed been, among us three
But nathelees, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two
Hadde I nat doon, a freendes torn to thee?
That oother answerde, I woot wel that may be
The gold, hath that the gold is with us tweye
What wol we doon, what shal we to hym seye?
Shal it be conseil, seyde the firste shrewe?
And I shal tellen, in a wordes fewe
What we shal doon, and bringen it wel aboute
I warante quod that oother, out of doute
That by myn thoutho, I shal thee nat bitreye
Wel quod the firste, thou woost wel we be tweye
And two of us, shul stronger be than oon
Loke whan pt he is set, that right anoon
Arys, as though thou woldest, ek hym pleye
And I shal ryve hym, thurgh the sydes tweye

Wyll that thou stryuyste with vs in game
And with thy daggyng/ looke thou do the same
And thanne/ shal al this gold departed be
My deere freend/ betwixen me and thee
Thanne may we bothe our lustes all fulfille
And pleye at dees/ right at our owene wille
And thus/ acordes been thise shrewes tweye
To sleen the thridde/ as ye han herd me seye
This yongeste/ which pt went vn to the toun
Ful ofte in herte/ he rolleth vp and doun
The beautee of thise floryns/ newe and bryghte
O lord quod he/ if so were pt I myghte
Have al this tresor/ to my self allone
Ther nis no man/ pt lyueth vnder the trone
Of god/ that sholde lyue so murye as I
And atte laste/ the feend our enemy
Putte in his thought/ pt he sholde poyson beye
With which he myghte/ sleen his felawes tweye
For why/ the feend foond hym in swich lyuynge
That he hadde leue/ hem to sorwe brynge
For this was outrely/ his full entente
To sleen hem bothe/ and nevere to repente
And forth he gooth/ no lenger wolde he tarie
Into the toun/ vn to a apothecarie
And preyde hym/ pt he hym wolde selle
Som poyson/ pt he myghte his rattes quelle
And eek ther was/ a polcat/ in his haye
That as he seyde/ his capons hadde yslaye
And fayn he wolde/ wreke hym/ if he myghte
On vermyn/ pt destroyed hym by nyghte
The apothecarie answerde/ and thou shalt have
A thyng/ that al so god my soule save
In al this world/ ther nis no creature
That eten or dronken hath/ of this confiture
Noght/ but the mountance of a corn of whete
That he ne shal/ his lif anon forlete
Ye sterue he shal/ and that in lasse while
Than thou wolt goon a paas/ nat but a myle
The poyson/ is so strong and violent/
This cursed man/ hath in his hond yhent/
This poyson in a box/ and after he ran
Into the nexte strete/ vn to a man
And borwed hym/ large botels thre
And in the two/ his poyson poured he
The thridde he kepte clene/ for his owene drynke
For al the nyght/ he shoop hym for to swynke
In caryynge of the gold/ out of that place
And whan this riotour/ with sory grace

Prioresse

Hadde fillen with hym hise grete botels thre
To hise felawes ageyn repayreth he
What needeth it to rehercen of it moore
ffor right as they hadde cast lhs deeth bifoore
Right so they han hym slayn and that anon
And thus seyd this was doon thus spak that oon
Now lat us sitte and drynke and make us merie
And after wards we shul his body berie
And with that word it happed hym pat was
To take the botel ther the poyson was
And dranke and yaf his felawe drynke also
ffor which anon they storven bothe two
But trewely I suppose that ywrien
Moot nede in no canon ne in no fen
Of alle hondry slynges of enpoisonyng
Pat hadde hise wrecches two of hym endyng
Thus endes been hise homycides two
And eek the falce enpoysoneresse also

Auctor

O cursed synne of alle cursednesse
O traytours homycide o wikkednesse
O glotonye luxurie and hasardrye
Thou blasphemour of crist with vilenye
And othes grete of usage and of pride
Allas mankynde how may it bitide
That to thy creatour which pat the wroghte
And with his precious herte blood thee boghte
Thou art so fals and so unkynde allas
Now goode men god foryeve yow your trespas
And ware yow fro the synne of avarice
Myn hooly pardon may yow alle warice
So pat ye offre nobles or sterlynges
Or elles silver broches spoones ringes
Boweth your heed under this hooly bulle
Com up ye wyves offreth of youre wolle
Youre names entre heer in myn rolle anon
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon
I yow assoille by myn heigh power
Yow pat wol offre as clene and eek as cleer
As ye were born and lo sires thus I preche
And Jhesu crist that is our soules leche
So graunte yow his pardon to receyve
ffor that is best I wol yow nat deceyve
But sires o word forgat I in my tale
I have relikes and pardon in my male
As fyn as any man in Engelond
Which were me yeven by the popes hond
If any of yow wole of devocion
Offren and han myn absolucion

¶ Pardoner

Com forth anon / and sheleth heeyr adoun
And meekely / receyueth my pardoun
Or elles / taketh pardon / as ye wende
Al newe and fresh / at euery / myles ende
So pt ye offren / alwey newe and newe
Nobles or pens / whiche pt be goode and trewe
It is an honour / to euerich that is heer
That ye mowe haue / a suffisant Pardoner
Tassoille yow / in contree as ye ryde
For auentures / whiche pt may bityde
Parauenture / there may falleu / oon or two
Down of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo
Loke whiche a seurtee / is it to yow alle
That I am / in youre felaweshipe yfalle.
That may assoille yow / bothe moore and lasse
Whan pt the soule / shal fro the body passe
I rede / pt oure hoost heere shal bigynne
For he is moost envoluped in synne
Com forth thy lewed hoost / and offre first anon
And thou shalt kisse my relikes everichon
Ye for a grote / anoon thy purs
May / quod he / thanne shal I newe and thanne shal I ryse
Nat be quod he / it shal nat be so theech
Thou woldest make me / kisse thyn olde breech
And swere it were a relyk of a seint
Though it were / right thy fundement depeint
But by the cokes / whiche pt seint Eleyne fond
I wolde / I hadde / thy coillons in myn hond
In stide of relikes / or of seintuarie
Let kutte hem of / I wol help hem bere
They shul be shryned / in an hogges toord
This Pardoner / answerde nat a word
So wroth he was / no word ne wolde he seye
Now quod our hoost / I wol no lenger pleye
With thee / ne with noon other angry man
But right anon / the worthy knight bigan
Whan pt he sawgh / pt al the peple lough
Han moore of this / for it was right ynough
Now Pardoner / be glad and myne of cheere
And ye our hoost / pt been to me so deere
I pray yow / pt ye kisse the Pardoner
And Pardoner / I pray thee / drawe thee neer
And as we diden / let vs laughe and pleye
Anon they kiste / and riden forth hir weye

Heere is ended the Pardoners tale

Shyman

Here bigynneth the Shipmannes tale

A Marchaunt whilom dwelled at Seint Denys
That riche was for which men helde hym dys
A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee
And compaignable and pleyelous was she
Which is a thyng that causeth moore dispence
Than doth is al the chiere and pleyesence
That men hem doon at festes and at daunces
Withe salutacions and contenaunces
Passen as dooth a shadwe up on the wal
But woo is hym that payen moot for al
The wyf housbonde algate he moste paye
He moot us clothe and he moot us arraye
Al for his owene worship richely
In which array we daunce jolily
And if that oght may passe aventure
Or elles list no wight dispence endure
But thynketh it is wasted and ylost
Thanne moot another payen for oure cost
Or lene us gold and that is pirilous
This noble marchaunt heeld a worthy hous
For which he hadde alday so greet repair
For his largesse and for his wyf was fair
That wonder is but herkneth to my tale
Amonges alle his gestes grete and smale
Ther was a wyf a fair man and a bold
A tredre of thrifty wynter he was old
That evere in oon was comynge to that place
This yonge monk that was so fair of face
Acquevnted was so with the goode man
Syth that hir first knoweliche bigan
That in his hous as familier was he
As it is possible any freend to be
And for as muchel as this goode man
And eek this monk of which I bigan
Were bothe two yborn in o village
The monk hym claymeth as for cosynage
And he agayn he seith nat ones nay
But was as glad therof as fowel of day
For to his herte it was a greet plesance
Thus been they knyt with eterne alliance
And ech of hem gan other for tassure
Of brotherhede whil that hir lyf may dure

¶ Ffree was Dam John / and nameli of dispence
As in that hous / and ful of diligence
To doon plesance / and also gret costage
He nolst forgat / to yeue the leeste page
In al the hous / but after sty degree
He yaf the lord / and eitthe al his meynee
Whan that he cam / com maneye honest thyng
ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng
As fowel is fayn / whan pt the sonne vp riseth
Manyoge of this as now / for it suffiseth
It so bifel / this mayschaut on a day
Shoop hym / to make redy his array
Toward / the toun of Brugges for to fare
To byen there / a portion of ware
ffor which / he hath to Dayys sent anon
A messagey / and preyes hath Dam John
That he sholde come / to Seint Denys to pleye
With hym and ete his breed / a day or tweye
Er he to Brugges went / in alle wise
¶ This noble mynk / of which I yow devyse
Hath of his abbot / as hym list licence
By cause / he was a man / of heigh prudence
And eek an officer / out for to ryde
To seen sty graunges / and sty bernes wyde
And in to Seint Denys / he comth anon
Who was so welcome / as my lord Dam John
Oure deere tosyn / ful of curteisye
With hym broghte he a jubbe of malvesye
And eek another ful of fyn vernage
And volatyl / as ay was his vsage
And thus / I lete hem drynke and pleye
This mayschaut and this mynk / a day or tweye
¶ The thridde day / this mayschaut up ariseth
And on his nedes / sadly hym avyseth
And up / in to his countour hous gooth he
To reken with hym self / as wel may be
Of thilke yeer / how pt it with hym stood
And how pt he / despended hadde his good
And if pt he / encressed were or noon
His bookes / and his bagges many oon
He leith biforn hym / on his countyng bord
Ful riche / was his tresor and his bord
For which ful fast / his countour dore he shette
And eek he nolde / pt no man sholde hym lette
Of his accountes / for the meene tyme
And thus he sit / til it was passed prym
¶ Dam John was risen / in the morke also
And in the gardyn / walketh to and fro

And hath his thynges seyd ful tuteisly
¶ This goode wyf cam walkynge pryuely
In to the gardyn there he walketh softe
And hym saleweth as she hath doon ofte
A mayde child cam in hir compaignye
Which as hir list she may governe and gye
For yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
¶ Beye tosyn myn dam John she sayde
What eyleth yow so rathe for to ryse
¶ Nece quod he it ought ynough suffise
Fyue houres for to slepe vpon a nyght
But it be for an old appalled wight
As been thise bodied men pt lye and daye
As in a fourme or a cley hale
Be al forstraught or hounde3 grete a quale
But beye Nece why be ye so pale
I trowe doo that oure goode man
Hath yow laboured sith the nyght bigan
That yow behoueth nede to reste hastily
And or that ooth be lough ful mumply
And of his owene thought he cast al reed
¶ This false wyf gan for to shake hir heed
And seyde thus ye god woot al qwod she
Nay nay tosyn myn it stant nat so wt me
For by that god that yaf me soule and lyf
In al the realme of ffrance is there no wyf
That lasse lust hath to that ilke pley
For I may synge allas and weylaway
That I was born but to no wight quod she
Dar I nat telle how that it stant wt me
Wherfore I thynke out of this land to wende
Or elles of my self to make an ende
So ful am I of drede and eek of care
¶ This wyf bigan vp on this newe fare
And seyde allas my Nece god forbede
That ye for any sorwe or any drede
Fordo your self but telle me of your grief
Paraventure I yow may in your mescheef
Counseille or helpe and therfore telleth me
Al your anoy for it shal been secree
For on my porthors I make an ooth
That nere in my lyf for lief ne loth
Ne shal I of no counseil yow bywreye
¶ The came agayn to yow quod she I seye
By god and by this porthors I yow swere
Though men me sholde al in to pieces tere
Ne shal I neuere for to goon to helle
Bywreye a word of thyng pt ye me telle

Nat for no coſynage ne alliance
But wyſely for loue and affiance
Thus been they aſſoꝛd and heey vp on they ꝛiſte
And ech of hem tolde oothey what hem liſte
Coſyn quod ose yf pt I hadde a ſpace
As I haue noon and namely in this place
Thanne wolde I telle a legende of my lyf
That I haue ſuffred ſith I was a wyf
With myn houſbonde al be he of youre kyn
Nay quod this wyuke by god and by ſeint martyn
He is namoꝛe coſyn vn to me
Than is this lief pt hangeth on the tree
I clepe hym ſo by ſeint denys of ffrance
To haue the moꝛe cauſe of aqueyntance
Of yoꝛe which I haue knowen ofte ſithes
Abouen alle wommen ofte ſithes
This ofte I yoꝛe on my confeſſion
Telleth youre griefs lefe pt he come adoun
And haſteth yoꝛe and gooth youre wey anon
Myn deere lord quod ose o my dame ſoon
fful lief ſeye me this conſeil foꝛ to hyde
But out it moot I may namoꝛe abyde
Myn houſbonde is to me the woꝛſte man
That euer was ſith pt the woꝛld began
But ſith I am a wyf it ſit natt me
To telle no wight of oure priuetee
Neither a bedde ne in noon oothey place
God childe I holde it telleu foꝛ his grace
A wyf ne ſhal natt ſeyn of hir houſbonde
But al honoury as I can vnderſtonde
Came vn to yoꝛe thus muche I telleu ſhal
As help me god he is noght woꝛth at al
In no degree the value of a flye
But yet me greueth moſt his nygardye
And ek ye knoot pt women natureliy
Deſiren thynges alle as wel as I
They wolde that hir houſbondes ſholde be
Hardy & wiſe and riche & therto free
And buxom vn to his wyf and freſſh abedde
But by that ilke loꝛd that foꝛ vs bledde
ffoꝛ his honour myſelf foꝛ to arraye
A ſondayy next I moſte nedes payе
An hundred frankes oꝛ ellis I am dꝛu
yet keye me lefe that I keye vnboꝛu
Than me keye doon a ſkarmyſe oꝛ bikeyne
And if myn houſbonde eek it myghte eſſoyne
I nele nat ſpaꝛe and therfoꝛe I yoꝛe preye
Leue me this alle oꝛ ellis moot I deye

Shipman

Daun Iohn I seye lene me thise hundred frankes
Pardee I shal nat faille yow my thankes
If that yow list to doon that I yow praye
For at a certeyn day I shal yow paye
And doon to yow what plesance and myce
That I may doon right as yow list devise
And but I do god take on me vengeance
As foul as ever was Gemyloun of ffrance
This gentil monk auiseyde hir in this manere
How discreetly myn oostesse and hir dere
I shal hire quod he on yow so wreke a wyse
That I yow shal and plighte yow my trouthe
That eschaun your husbonde is to fflaundres fare
I shal delyvere yow out of this care
For I shal brynge yow an hundred frankes
And eek that scheme he caughte hir by the flankes
And hir embraceth harde and kiste hir ofte
Goode nece yonne key quod he al stille & softe
And lat us dyne as soone as myghte we may
For by my thilymdre it is prymme of day
Goode nece and goeth as thikke as I shal be
How elles god forbede sire quod she
And forth she goeth as jolif as a pye
And bad the cookes that they shulde hem hye
So that men myghte dyne and that anon
Up to hir housbonde is this wyf ygon
And knokketh at his countour boldely
Who there quod he peter it am I
Quod she what ho how long shal I be faste
How long time shal I reken and caste
Your sommes and your bookes and your thynges
The deuel have part on alle swiche rekenynges
Ye have ynough pardee of goddes sonde
Com doun to day and let your bagges stonde
Wot ye nat what it is a clokke
How longe is it trowe I pray you nay
Wot I what longeth to eendes or to day
And he answerde and seyde my leeve sire
Al be so that I knowe a litel what
As touchynge thyn estaat as of this stounde
Ne sette I nat a myte in thy werkynge
Ne wolde to god tomorwe I were hanged
Unless that I wolde yeve al myn catel
That I ne hadde rekened wel and myn a del
With dette and with alle for wel I woot
Thou canst no skile in bokes nor no noot
And whan this yonge wyf had herd al this
How he spak to his wyf so lowe of pris
Unto hir mayde anon she yaf a wynke
And with hir heed she bad hir that she shynke
Adoun by eschelles out she wente anon
Ful softely and whan the monk hir sawe
Up to his chambre he hath hir drawe
And fayre and wel he dighte hir atte fulle
For wel he coude newe his old mulle
And sette hir on the newe gere ful hye
And she cam adoun by the stayre bye
And with hir mayde wente hir owene way
Whan that she saugh hir time up she lay
Unto hir husbonde and on hir wey she goth
Now dame quod he how longe wol ye doth
How longe time wol ye reken and caste
Your sommes and your bookes and your thynges
The deuel have part on alle swiche rekenynges
For I have wonne yfaith as myn catel
And I have payed wel and redily
For I have yeve hir of your wolle a sak
A wyf ne roghte nevere of it but lak
And leet hir streye wher she wolde or non
And spende it as hir lest a day or two
Al is myn owene and I have plesed me
Now dame quod he com doun and lat be
I am a man as ye han oft ywoon
Ye han a wyf it is non other boon
Com doun anon and make us merie chere
For by my fey thou shalt nat fynde me dere
For this thyng shaltow have a jolif wyf
And trewely as myn owene lyf
And she sprong up a pas and clapte to the dore
And downe she com and dide hir reverence
And made hir as it were of noght to do
But what she seyde I trowe ye listne to
Sire quod she I am yow to blame
And that wol I be avowe for Seint Iame
Or elles other what lyketh yow to calle
For though so be that I noght answere at alle
But suffre yow doon al your lust and your wille
Ye myghte nat therfore have me yeve a fille
For myn entente is everemore yow to plese
In thynges that reson wole and I have ese
To suffre hem after my tendre myght
Ye wolde me chide bothe day and nyght
And eek compelle me to doon right so
For som folk drinken nat but whan they go
And som folk for they wolde have a thank
And som folk for custume and som folk for they crank
And som folk drinken for they wolde wedde
And som folk drinken for drede to be dedde
I drinke right for thurst now wol I preve
Me to excuse er that I wol remeve
I drinke for I have wet my throte to clense
For I wol telle yow no fantasie
But that I wol alday answere to my make
As wel in worde as in my countenance
For I wol nat countrepleten hir for no thyng
But she wol seye hir reson I wol hire heere
And suffre hir wille and do right as hir leste
I prey yow wyf blameth me nat for this
For myn entente is for to preve me thus
Now sire quod she and elles god forbede
But I yow have agilt as I have drede
Foryeve it me for myn entente nas nought
To displese yow but for to doon yow myrthe
And by that lord that men clepeth crist
Ne wende I nevere han had to yow mystrist
For trewely sire al your reson is right
In what I have trespassed in your sight
And sire I wol amende it if I may
Or elles I wol doon right as yow say
Sire I wol kepe bothe your bed and eek your hall
Right as yow list whil that it shal be mall
Sire I wol be as bisy on your profyt
As any bee that ever was set on wyng
Ful fayre and wel she spak unto hir lord
But natheless he took of hir no kepe
He knew hir queynte and al hir subtilte
Hir colour loos hir face pale and wan
Hir hidous loking after she hath man
Hir rolling eyen and hir dispitous chere
Was chaunged first that stode hir so ful clere
And that was cause and ground of al hir wo
He hath noght yet perceyved it so
But of that point he was ful necligent
But atte laste whan that his wyf was went
Unto the chirche his prymer for to seye
His hertes rote his solace and his heye
Gan for to studie upon this wyves lore
And every word hir cast and every wore
And every countenance and every look
That she hath doon and eek hir wommanhode
For he ne wende for to have hir childe
And whan he saugh his time he seyde mylde
Wyf quod this man litel daun Iohn your cosyn
That ryche is and a gentil man withalle
And eek a man of gret reverence
He preyed me for to lene him of my pursse
Fifty frankes for a certeyn bille
A shorte day and payen it agayn
I wende he wolde han axed me in vayn
For many a man hath trowed me right wel
God woot and eek somtyme have I ben to fel
Trusting on folk that have me after maad
But stille quod she and spek right nat a word
Ful many a day is passed and gon
Sith that myn heed was broght to yow at hom
Thurgh which I have yow kept and save your good
Thurgh me ye thryve and eek your name is good
In al the toun as wel as I best can
And trewely as myn owene lyf I man
For by my trouthe I knowe yow for myn al
I have a tonge and wo is him shal it assayle
For I can pleyne and repleyne if nede be
I have a power man by myself pardee
And though I speke yow fynde I nevere a deel
Ne nevere wol for it is right and reson
For what I thynke I speke right boldely
But sire by god that boghte us bothe dere
I wol nat plede as of a thyng in vere
But sire if that I wiste pleynly your wille
Right what yow list my lyf and eek my catel
Is al yow fre to save or spille
Now wyf quod he I wol nat have it spent
Ne nevere yet ne roghte I for thy gent
Ne nevere wol thou shalt wel understonde
Ne nevere dide I thyng by thy conseyle
The bet whil that I lyve I wol nat wene
But as me list my self and by myn eene
And have right now swiche a lust to pleye
That if it myghte stonden in thy weye
I wolde have myn hosen knyt upon my leg
For I wol forthe unto my nece Margarete
And drinke there a draughte or two or three
And there I wol a while myself solace
With wyn and with my nece eek sporte and pleye
But I wol come agayn right at thyn hest
Whan that me list come hom and nat a best
Ne shal nat daunce after my pipe a lavre
Now sire quod she for Cristes owene mavre
Be nat displesed of that I shal yow seye
Me thynketh it is a thyng ful necessarye
That we to yow have som discrecioun
How we shal lede our lyf in this toun
And have an eye unto our neighebores wyf
And nat to be to homly ne to daungerous
Ne yeve nat al the reyne unto our face
But be ful wys and hold our estat with grace
Ful many wyf is loste right for hir pryde
Ful soone is lost that thyng that may nat abyde
And for a wyf it is no thyng honeste
To be to wylde ne pleye ne to reste
Ne nevere out of doores for to gon
Whan that hir lust to walke or rome alon
Ne nevere to visite ne chirche ne cheepe
Ne nevere to leten folk han of hir keepe
Ne nevere to be to large of hir dispence
For though your purse be ful of your despence
Ful soone shal it be voyded of your good
Ye wyves conne it bet than we men coude
With us men han but thrift and spare
Ye wyves conne it al another fare
Ye sette us wyde open al the yate
That wasted is as wel soone as that
That goten is with sorwe and with care
Ye sire quod she but by my fader soule
Ne wol nat ye but litel of my good
For myn entente is for to lede right
As for the worshipe of myself and yow
I wol nat spille wantonly your good
I have myself ynough and eek I wood
Ne nevere wol yow shame right as I wil
Ne nevere wol I doon it by my wil
I prey yow that ye wolde wratthe yow nought
Thus softely hir lord he answerde thought
Wyf quod he thou hast right wel ysayd
Beth as thou hast ybeen and be glad
Of al myn owene thyng my lyf and deeth
And eek my catel my body and my heeth
Governe it as thee list and I wol fare
The wel for thou shalt have no kare
Ne of myn owene ne of non other thyng
Right as thee list governe and lede thy lyf
I have yow wedded in the feyth of my body
And pardee I wol be trewe unto thee
Now wyf I wol no more wordes heere
Bet were a galon wyn to fille us heere
Than that we two make us wery
Now wyf quod he let us no more chyde
I prey yow that we kisse and be al frende
For I wol nat speke another word
Ne this day and this is my forward
Ne though men sholde me drawe with hors and wayne
Now sire quod she er that I go hom
Ne shal nat we dyne
Yes wyf quod he I trowe that we shal
Now wyf quod he let us no more debate
I have yow seyd and that is al my rede
Now sire quod she I wol nat disobeye
Ne nevere dide I sith that I yow seye
Ne nevere wol I al my lyf to day
Now wyf quod he let us no more chyde
I prey yow that we kisse and be al frende
For I wol nat speke another word
Ne this day and this is my forward
Ne though men sholde me drawe with hors and wayne
Now sire quod she er that I go hom
Ne shal nat we dyne
Yes wyf quod he I trowe that we shal
Now wyf quod he let us no more debate
I have yow seyd and that is al my rede
Now sire quod she I wol nat disobeye
Ne nevere dide I sith that I yow seye
Ne nevere wol I al my lyf to day

And they fore haue ¶ grete necessitee
Up on this queynte cost to tarrye me
ffor edemooze / he moste stonde in drede
Of hap and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede
To ffladres / wol ¶ go / to morwe at day
And come agayn / as soone as ede ¶ may
ffor which my deep wif ¶ thee biseke
As be to euery wight buxom and meke
And for to kepe oure good / be diligent
And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous
Thou hast ynough / in euery manner wise
That to a thrifty household may suffise
Thee lacketh noon alway / ne no vitaille
Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille
And with that word / his counto^r doze he shette
And doun he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette
But hastily / a messe was they seyd
And spedily / the tables were yleyd
And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde
And richely / this wyues the chapman fedde
¶ At after dyner / daun John soburely
This chapman took / a part / and priuely
He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so
That wel ¶ se / to chynagges / wol ye go
God and seint Austyn / spede youre and gyde
¶ prey youre cosyn / wisely that ye wyde
Gouerneth youre also / of youre diete
Attemprely / and namely in this hete
Betwix vs two / needeth no straunge faye
ffare wel cosyn / god shilde youre fro care
And if p^t any thyng / by day or nyght /
If it lye in myn pouch / and my myght /
That ye me wol comande in any wyse
It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse
¶ But thyng / ey p^t ye goon / if it may be
¶ wolde prey youre / for to lene me
An hundred frankes / for a litel or two
ffor certein beestes / p^t ¶ moste beye
To stonde with a place p^t is oures
God help me so / ¶ wolde it were youres
¶ shal nat faille / surely at my day
Nat for a thousand frankes a myle way
But lat this thyng be secree / ¶ youre prey
ffor yet to nyght / thise beestes moot ¶ beye
And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere
Grauntmercy / of youre cost / and of youre cheere
¶ This noble marchant / gentilly anon
Answerde / and seyde o cosyn myn daun John

Shipman

Now sikerly / this is a cruel iourneye
My gold is youres / than pt it yow leste
And natt oonly my gold / but my chaffaye
Take eche that yow list / god schilde pt ye owe paye
But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynogh
Of chapmen / thatt hir moneie is hir ploghe
We may restore / whil we haue a name
But goddes forbode to be / it is no game
Paye it again / than it lith in youre ese
After my myght / ful fayn wolde I yow plese
Thise hundred frankes / he fette hym forth anon
And prively / he took hem to Dam John
Ne wight in al this world / kiste of this loone
Sauynge this wyf / and Dam John allone
Thei drynke and speke / and romen a while & pleye
Til pt Dam John / wendeth to his Abbeye
The monke tan / and forth this wyf wendeth
To fflaundres forth / his pilgrymage wel hym gydeth
Til he tan / in to Bruges comyn
Ful goodly this wyf / fast and busily
Aboute his nede / and byeth and chaffareth
He neither / pleyeth at dees ne Daunceth
But as a wyf / ful worthly for to telle
He let his lyf / and thei I lete hym dwelle
The sonday next / this wyf gan agon
To Dam John / rowmen is Dam John
With chekne and beyn al fleschly and nerbe yschrne
In al the hous / they nas so litel a knape
Ne no wight elles / pt he nas ful fayn
That my lord Dam John / was come again
And shortly / right to the point for to gon
This faire wyf / acorded with Dam John
That for thise hundred frankes / he sholde al nyght
Have hir in his armes / bolt vpright
And this acord / ypassed was in dede
In myn thise al nyght a busy lyf they lede
Til it was day / pt Dam John wente his way
And bad the meynee / faye wel haue good day
For noon of hem / ne no wight in the toun
Hath of Dam John / right no suspecioun
And forth he rydeth / hoom to his Abbeye
Or ther hym list / no more of hym I seye
Fro this wyf than / pt euer was the fayn
To Dam John / he gan for to purueye
And with his wyf / he maketh feeste and cheere
And telleth him / that chaffaye is so deere
That nedes / moste he make a chevyssance
For he was bounden / in a grete summe

To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon
ffor which this mayschaunt is to paye gon
To borwe of freende fleendes pt he hadde
A certyn frankes and ouwe yt he hadde
And whan pt he was comen to the toun
ffor greet chiertee and greet affection
Vn to dam John he gooth hym first to pleye
Nat for to aske or borwe of hym moneye
But for to wite and seen of his welfare
And for to tellen hym of his chaffare
As freendes doon whan they been met yfeere
Dam John hym maketh feeste and mury cheere
And he hym tolde again ful specially
How he hadde wel ybought and thriftily
Thanked be god al hool his marchandise
Save pt he moste in alle manere wise
Waken a chevyssaunce as for his beste
And thanne he sholde been in ioye and reste
Dam John answerde certes I am fayn
That ye in heele ayen comen hom again
And if pt I myghte aught in any wise
Of twenty thousand sheeld sholde ye nat mysse
ffor ye so frendely this oother day
Lente me gold and as I kan and may
I thanke yow by god and by seint Jame
But natheless I took unto oure dame
youre cofre at hom the same gold ageyn
Vpon youre bench she woot it wel certeyn
By certeyn tokenes that I kan yow telle
Now by youre leue I may no lenger dwelle
Oure Abbot wole out of this toun anon
And in his compaignye moot I goon
Grete wel oure dame myn owene nece sweete
And fare wel deere cosyn til we meete
This mayschaunt which pt was ful glad and blyve
Hem thanked hath and payd eek in payes
To certeyn bussches redy in hir hondes
The dobleres of gold and hadde of hem his bondes
And hoom he gooth mury as a papeiay
ffor wel he knew he stood in swich array
That nedes moste he wynne in that yeere
A thousand frankes abouen al his costage
His wyf ful redy mette hym atte gate
As she was wont of olde vsage algate
And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette
ffor he was riche and clerely out of dette
Whan it was day this mayschaunt gan embrace
His wyf al newe and kiste hir on hir face

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And vp he gooth / and maketh it ful tough
Namoore quod she / by god ye haue ynough
And hastiliche agayn / ful faire she pleyde
Til atte laste / this wyf ful softe seyde
By god quod she / I am a litel wroth
With you myn herte / al though it reweth me looth
And wroot ye wel / by god as pt I gesse
That ye han maad a manere straungenesse
Bitwixen me / and myn cosyn dam John
Ye sholde han rouned me / er I had gon
That he your hoste hadde / an hundred frankes payed
By redy token / and heeld him yuele apayed
For pt I to him spak of thevyssance
Me semed so / as by his contenance
But natheles / by god oure lemmans knowe
I thoughte nat / to axen him no thyng
I preye thee swyf / as do namoore so
Telle me alwey / er that I fro thee go
If any wrong / hath in myn absence
I preye thee / left thurgh thy negligence
I mysgrette him ought / a thing that he hath prayed
This wyf / was nat afeyed / ne affrayed
But boldely she seyde / and that anon
Nay / I defie the falce monk dam John
I kepe nat of swiche tokenes / man a deel
He took me certeyn gold / that woot I weel
That yuel thedam / on his monkes croppe
For god it woot / I wende wel outen doute
That he hadde yeue it me / by cause of yow
To doon they with / myn honour and my prow
For cosynage / and eek for beele cheere
That he hath had ful ofte tymes heere
But sith I se / I stonde in this disjoynt
I wol answere you / shortly to the poynt
Ye han me maad many settynges than ofte
For I wol paye your / wel and redily
Ye day to day / and if so be I faille
I am your wyf / score it vp on my taille
And I shal paye / as soone as ever I may
For by my trouthe / I have on myn array
And nat on wast / bistowed every deel
And for I have / bistowed it so weel
For your honour / for goddes sake I seye
Be nat wroth / but lat us laughe and pleye
Ye shal / my nobil body / have to wedde
By god I wol nat paye you but a bedde
Forgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere
Turne hider / wayth / and maketh better cheere

¶ Shipman

¶ This wayfaut cauȝht they was no remedie
And for to chide it neys but greet folie
Sith that the thyng may nat amended be
Mock ich yf ich seyde and I forȝeue it thee
But by thy lyf ne be namoore so large
Keep bet oure goos that yeue I thee in charge
Thus endeth my tale and god vs sende
Tauchynge ynough vn to oure lyues ende Amen

¶ Heere endeth the Shipmannes tale

¶ Bihoold the mynde wordes of the Hoost to the Shipman and to the lady Prioresse

Wel seyd by corpus dominus quod oure hoost
Mock longe moote thou caulle by the toost
Of gentil maysterr gentil mayneer
God yeue this monk a thousand last quade yeer
A ha felawes beth ware of swich a jape
The monk putte in the maunes hood an ape
And in his eyen eek by seint austyn
Draweth no monkes moore vn to youre in
¶ But now passe ovr and let vs ekе aboute
Who shal now telle first of al this poute
Another tale and ich that forȝ he mayde
As trupenly as it has been a mayde
My lady prioresse by youre leue
So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greue
I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
A tale next if so wel ys that ye wolde
Now wol ye vouche sauf my lady deere
¶ Gladly quod she and seyde as ye shal heere

¶ Explicit

¶ The prologe of the Prioresses tale

Domine dominus noster

O lord oure lord thy name how merueillous
Is in this large world ysprad quod she
For nogt only — thy laude precious
Parfourmed is by men of dignitee
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourmed is for on the brest soukynge
Sometyme shewen they thyn heryynge

¶ Prioresses

Wherfore in laude as I best kan or may
Of thee and of the lylye flowr
Which that the bar and is a mayde alway
To telle a storie I wol do my labour
Nat that I may encreesse hir honour
For she hir self is honour and the roote
Of bountee next hir sone and soules boote

O moodey mayde o mayde moodey free
O bussh vnbrent brennyng in moyses sighte
That ravysedest down fro the deitee
Thurgh thyn humblesse the goost in thalighte
Of whos vertu whan he thyn herte lighte
Conceyved was the fadres sapience
Help me to telle it in thy reverence

Lady thy bountee thy magnificence
Thy vertu and thy grete humylitee
They may no tonge expresse in no science
For some tymes lady er men praye to thee
Thou goost biforn of thy benygnytee
And getest vs thurgh thy light of thy preyere
To gyden vs vn to thy sone so deere

My konnyng is so wayk o blisful queene
For to declare thy grete worthynesse
That I no may the weighte nat sustene
But as a child of twelf monthe old or lesse
That kan vnnethe any word expresse
Right so fare I and therfore I yow preye
Forveth my song pt I shal of yow seye

¶ Explicit

¶ Here bigynneth the Prioresses tale

Ther was in Asye in a greet citee
Amonges cristene folk a Jewerye
Sustened by a lord of that contree
For foul vsure and lucre of vilenye ¶ Tyre lucum
Hatful to Crist and to his compaignye
And thurgh this strete men myghte ride or wende
For it was free and open at eyther ende

A litel scole of cristen folk they stood
Doun at the fethes ende / in which they dwelle
Children an heep / ycomen of cristen blood
That lerned in that scole / yeer by yere
Swich maner doctrine as men used there
This is to seyn / to singen / and to rede
As smale children doon / in hir childhede

Among this children / was a wydwes sone
A litel clergeon / seven yeer of age
That day by day / to scole was his wone
And eek also / where as he saugh thymage
Of cristes moodre / he hadde in usage
As him was taught / to knele adoun and seye
His Ave Maire / as he goth by the weye

Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught
Oure blisful lady cristes moodre deere
To worshipe ay / and he forgat it naught
For yong child / wol alday soone leere
But ay / whan I remembre on this mateere
Seint Nicholas / stant evere in my presence
For he so yong / to crist / dide reverence

This litel child / his litel book / lernynge
As he sat in the scole / at his prymer
He Alma redemptoris / herde synge
As children / lerned hir antifonere
And as he dorste / he drough him ner and ner
And herkned ay / the wordes and the note
Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote

Noght wiste he / what this latyn was to seye
For he so yong / and tendre was of age
But on a day / his felawe gan he preye
To expounden him this song / in his langage
Or telle him / why this song / was in usage
This preyde he him / to construe and declare
Ful often tyme / upon his knowes bare

His felawe / which that elder was than he
Answerde him thus / this song I have herd seye
Was made / of our blisful lady free
Hir to salue / and eek hir for to preye
To been our help / and socour / when we deye
I kan namoore / expounde in this mateere
I lerne song / I kan but smal grammeere

¶ Prioresse ...

Thus is this song/ maked in reuerence
Of cristes mooder/ seyde this innocent/
Now wolde/ I do my diligence
To conne it al/ er cristemasse is went/
Though I/ and for my ymbecylle/ shal be shent/
And shal be beten thries in an houre
I wol it conne/ our lady/ for to honoure

His felawe/ taughte hym homward prively
ffro day to day/ til he couthe it by rote
And thanne/ he song/ it wel and boldely
ffro word to word/ acordynge/ with the note
Twies a day/ it passed thurgh his throte
To scolewardward/ and homward whan he went
On cristes mooder/ set was his entente

As I haue seyd/ thurgh out the Iewerie
This litel child/ as he cam to and fro
fful merily/ wolde he synge and crie
O Alma redemptoris/ euere mo
The swetnesse/ his herte perced so
Of cristes mooder/ that to hym to preye
He kan nat stynte/ of syngynge/ by the weye

¶ Auctor ...

O thou fiyste foo/ the serpent Sathanas
That hast/ in Iues herte his nest/ yspred/ and seide/ o hebrayk/ peple allas
Is this to yow/ a thyng/ that is honest/
That swich a boy/ shal walken as hym lest/
In youre despit/ and synge of swich sentence
Which is/ agayn oure lawes reuerence

ffro thennes forth/ the Iues han conspired
This innocent/ out of this world to chace
An homycide/ they/ to/ han hyred
That in an alley/ hadde a pryue place
And as the child/ gan forby for to pace
This cursed Iew hym hente/ and heeld hym faste
And kitte his throte/ and in a pit hym caste

I seye/ that in A Iudayne/ they hym threwe
Ther as thise Iewes/ purgen hir entrayles
O cursed folk/ of herodes al newe
What may youre yuel entente you availle
Murder wol out/ certeyn/ it wol nat faille
And namely/ they/ thonour of god shal sprede
The blood out crieth/ on youre cursed dede

O martir / sowed to virginitee
Now maystow synge / folwynge euermoore
The white lamb celestial quod she
Of which the grete Euangelist / Seint John
In Pathmos wroot / which seith / pt they pt goon
Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe
That nevere / fleshly / wommen they no knewe

This ponge wyfwe / awaiteth al that nyght /
After hir litel child / but he cam noght /
For which as doon / as it was dayes lyght /
With face pale of drede / and bisy thoght /
She hath at hous / and elles where hym sought /
Til finally / she gan to fer espie
That she / last sowen was in the weye

With moodres pitee / in hir brest enclosed
She goth / as she were half out of hir mynde
To every place / where she hath supposed
By likli hede / hir litel child to fynde
And ever / on Cristes moodres / meeke and hynde
She cride / and atte laste / thus she wroght
Among / the cursed Jues / she hym sought

She frayneth / and she preyeth pitously
To every Jew / pt dwelte in thilke place
To telle hir / if hir child / were out oght forby
They seyde nay / but Jhu of his grace
yaf in hir thoght / within a litel space
That in that place / after hir sone she cryde
Where he was rasen / in a pit bisyde

Auctor

O grete god / that performest thy laude
By mouth of Innocentz / lo heer thy myght
This gemme of chastite / this Emeraude
And eek of martirdom / the Rubi bright
Ther he with throte ykorven lay upright
The Alma redemptoris / gan to synge
So loude / pt al the place gan to rynge

The cristene folk / that thurgh the strete weute
In rowmes / for to stonde vp on this thynge /
And hastily / they for the provost sente
He cam anon / with outen tarying /
And herieth Crist / that is of heven kyng /
And eek his moodres / honour of mankynde
And after that / the Jewes leet he binde

This child with pitous lamentacion
Up taken was/ syngynge his song alway
Al was with honour/ of gret procession
They camen him/ vn to the nexte abbey
His mooder owoldynge/ by his beere ay
Wimmen se/ mygh to the people pt was there
This nexte eschel/ bynge fro his beere

With torment/ and ot shamefil deth echon
This provost/ doth the Jewes for to fleme
That of this mordre wiste/ and that anon
He nolde/ no swich cursednesse observe
Vnele shal he have/ pt vnelo shal deserve
Therfore/ with wilde hors/ he dide hem drawe
And after that/ he heng hem by the lawe

Amp on this beere/ ay lith this Innocent/
Biforn the chief autey/ whil the masse laste
And after that/ the abbot/ with his Convent/
Han sped hem/ for to burien him ful faste
And whan they/ holy water on him caste
Yet spak this child/ whan sprevnd was holy water
And song/ O Alma redemptoris mater

This abbot/ which pt was an hooly man
As monkes been/ or elles oghte be
This yonge child/ to conjure he bigan
And seyde/ o dere child I halsen thee
In vertu of the hooly Trinitee
Tel me/ what is thy cause for to singe
Sith pt thy throte is kut/ to my clayme

Thy throte is kut/ vn to my nekke boon
Seyde this child/ and as by way of kynde
I sholde have dyed/ ye longe tyme agon
But Jhu crist/ as ye in bookes fynde
Wil pt his glorie last/ and be in mynde
And for the worshipe/ of his mooder deere
Yet may I singe/ O Alma/ loude and cleere

This welle of mercy cristes mooder swete
I loved alwey/ as after my konnynge
And whan pt my lyf/ shulde forlete
To me she cam/ and bad me for to singe
This Anthephen/ verraily/ in my deyynge
As ye han herd/ and whan pt I had songe
Me thoughte/ she leyde a greyn upon my tonge

Prioresses

Wherfore I synge / and synge I moot certeyn
In honour / of that Mistful mayden free
Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn
And afterwards / thus seyde she to me
My litel child now wol I fetche thee
Whan pt the greyn / is fro thy tonge ytake
Be nat agast / I wol thee nat forsake

This hooly monk / this Abbot him mene
His tonge out raughte / and took a wey the greyn
And he yaf up the goost / ful softely
And whan this Abbot / hadde this wonder seyn
His salte teres / trikled down as reyn
And grof he fil / al plat up on the grounde
And stille he lay / as he hadde leyn ybounde

The Covent / eek / lay on the pavement
Wepyinge / and preyen tristes moodey deere
And after that / they ryse and forth been went
And tooken awey / this martyr from his beere
And in a tombe / of marbul stones cleere
Enclosen they / his litel body sweete
Ther / he is now / god leve vs alle for to meete

O yonge Hugh of Lincolne slayn also
With cursed Jewes / as it is notable
For it is / but a litel while ago
Preye eek for vs / we synful folk unstable
That of his mercy / god so merciable
On vs / his grete mercy multiplie
For reverence / of his moodey mayde Marie

Here is ended the Prioresses tale

Bihoold the mirie wordes of the Hoost to Chaucer

Whan seyd was al this miracle / every man
As sobre was / that wonder was to se
Til that our Hoost / japen to bigan
And thanne at erst / he loked upon me
And seyde thus / what man artow quod he?
Thou lookest / as thou woldest fynde an hare
For ever / upon the ground / I se thee stare

¶ Chaucer

Approche neer / and looke up myrily
Now ware yow eyes / and lat this man stande
be in the ware ste / is shape / as ever I sa[w] . . . henry sanday
This ilke a popet / in an oyn tentstace
ffor any woman smal / and fayr of face
he semeth elvysshe / by his contenance
ffor vn to no wight / dooth he daliance

Sey now som what / oyn oothey folk han sayd
Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon
hoost / quod I / ne beth nat yvele apayd
ffor oothey tale / ceses kan I noon
But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon
ye that is good quod he / now shul ye heere
Som deyntee thyng / me thynketh by his cheere

¶ Explicit /

¶ Heere biginneth Chaucers tale of Thopas

Listeth lordes in good entent /
And I wol telle verrayment /
Of myrthe and of solas /
Al of a knyght / was fair and gent /
In bataille / and in tourneyment /
his name was sir Thopas

Yboren he was / in fer contree
In flaundres / al biyonde the see
At poperyng / in the place
his fader was / a man full free
And lord he was / of that contree
As it was goddes grace

¶ Sir Thopas / was a doghty swayn
Whit was his face as payndemayn
His lippes rede as rose
His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn
And I yow telle in good certayn
he hadde a semely nose

His heer / his beerd / was lyk saffroun
That to his girdel raughte adoun
His shoos of cordewane
Of brugges / were his hosen broun
His robe / was of syklatoun
That coste many a jane

he koude hunte / at wilde deer
And ride an hauking / for rivere
Wit grey goshauk on honde
Therto he was / a good archeer
Of wrastlyng / was ther noon his peer
Ther any ram shal stonde

fful many a mayde / bright in bour
They moorne for him paramour
Whan hem were bet to slepe
But he was chaast / and no lechour
And sweete / as is the brembul flour
That bereth the yede hepe

¶ And so bifel / upon a day
ffor sothe / as I yow telle may
Sir Thopas wolde out ride
he thoght / upon his steede gay
And in his hand a launcegay
A long sheeld / by his side

He pryketh thurgh a fayr forest
Ther-inne is many a wilde best
And as he pryketh north & est
I telle it yow hym hadde almest
Ther sprungen herbes grete & smale
The lycorys and cetewale
And notemuge to putte in ale
Whether it be moyste or stale
The briddes synge it is no nay
The sparhauk and the papejay
The thrustelcok made eek his lay
The wodedowve upon a spray
Wo was Thopas fil in love longynge
al whan he herde the thrustel synge
his faire steede in his prikynge
So swatte pt men myghte him wrynge
Wo was Thopas eek so wery was
For prikynge on the softe gras
That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his steede som solas
O seinte mary benedicite
What eyleth this love at me
to bynde me so sore
me dremes al this nyght pt I see
An elf queene shal my lemman be
An elf queene shal I love ywis
For in this world no womman is
Alle other women I forsake
And to an elf queene I me take
By dale and eek by downe
In to his sadel he clamb anon
And pryketh over stile and stoon
An elf queene for to sekene
So wilde
Til he so longe hadde riden and goon
That he foond in a privee woon
The contree of Fairye
So wilde
For in that contree was there noon
neither wyf ne childe
Til pt he cam a grete geaunt
A pilous man of dede
His name was sire Olifaunt
With mace
He sevene childe by Pernagaunt
Anon I ded thy steede
But if thou pryke out of myn haunt
Ywelleynge in this place
Ywis in this contree am I
Sire child sey me
Than I have myn ayenward
Thy mace
Or I wil meete pt thee
And yet I hope pt I shal
abyen it ful sore
That thou shalt ete this Sarmesyn
Thyn hawbergh shal I prest in fyn
For here thow shalt be slayn
Er it be fully prime of day
Sire Thopas spak a word ful fast
Out of a fel staf slynge
That doun the geaunt at his stevene cast
And thurgh his eye his brayn yshette
Was Thopas eek so wery was
For prikynge on the softe gras
That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his steede som solas
O seinte mary benedicite
What eyleth this love at me
to bynde me so sore
me dremes al this nyght pt I see
An elf queene shal my lemman be
An elf queene shal I love ywis
For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make
In toune
Alle other women I forsake
By dale and eek by downe
And to an elf queene I me take
In to his sadel he clamb anon
An elf queene for to sekene
So wilde
And pryketh over stile and stoon
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Thy mace
And yet I hope pt I shal
abyen it ful sore
That thou shalt ete this Sarmesyn
For here thow shalt be slayn
Thyn hawbergh shal I prest in fyn
Er it be fully prime of day
Out of a fel staf slynge
Sire Thopas spak a word ful fast
And thurgh his eye his brayn yshette
This geaunt at his stevene cast
But sone estarteth sire Thopas
And al it was thurgh goddes gras

Yet lysteth lordes to my tale
Muryer than the nightyngale
Now syr Thopas with oughes smale
Prykyng ouer hill and dale
Hys myrthe men comaundes he
To make hym bothe game and gle
For with a geaunt with hondes thre
For pauoure and pouste
Ydo come he oughe my wyn stales
And geestoures for to tellen tales
Of romaunces that been roiales
Of popes and of cardinales
They fette hym first swete wyn
And wyne eek in a wastelyn
And gyngebreed pt was ful fyn
And lycorys and eek comyn
The bote next his white leep
Of cloth of lake fyn and cleep
And next his shepte an aketon
And ouer that an haubergeon
And ouer that a fyn hawbergh
Was al ywrought of pesses werk
And ouer that his cote armoure
As whit as is a lilye flour
His sheeld was al of gold so reed
And ther vpon was a bores heed
And ther he swoor on ale and breed
How pt the geaunt shal be deed
His jambeux were of quyr bouly
His sworde shethe of yuory
His helm was of latoun bryght
Was the moone lyght
His byl as the corune shoon
His spere it was of fyn cipres
That bowed was and nothyng wes
His steede was al dappull gray
It goth an Ambil in the way
Loo lordes myne here is a fit
If ye wol any more of it
Now holde youre mouth par charite
Bothe knyght and lady free
Of batailles and of chyualry
And of ladyes lowe and myry
Now speken of romances of prys
Of horn child and of ypotys
Of bevys and of pleyndamour
But pt Thopas he bereth the flour
His goode steede al he bistrood
And forth vpon his way he rood

Yet lysteth lordes to my tale — Sol yoke lowne
Muryer than the nightyngale — Is comen agayn to towne
Now syr Thopas with oughes smale
Prykyng ouer hill and dale
His myrthe men comaundes he — For nedes moste he fighte
To make hym bothe game and gle
With a geaunt with hondes thre — Of oon that shoon ful bryghte
For pauoure and pouste
Ydo come he oughe my wyn stales — Alon in myn armynge
And geestoures for to tellen tales
Of romaunces that been roiales — And eek of love likynge
Of popes and of cardinales
They fette hym first swete wyn — And roial spicerye
And wyne eek in a wastelyn
And gyngebreed pt was ful fyn — With sugre pt is so trye
And lycorys and eek comyn
The bote next his white leep — A breech and eek a shepte
Of cloth of lake fyn and cleep
And next his shepte an aketon — For pericynge of his shepte
And ouer that an haubergeon
And ouer that a fyn hawbergh — Ful strong it was of plate
Was al ywrought of pesses werk
And ouer that his cote armoure — In which he wol debate
As whit as is a lilye flour
His sheeld was al of gold so reed — A chaboucle ther vpon
And ther was a bores heed
And ther he swoor on ale and breed — Bityde what bityde
How pt the geaunt shal be deed
His jambeux were of quyr bouly — His helm of latoun bryght
His swerdes shethe of yuory
His sadel was of rewel boon — Was the moone lyght
His byl as the corune shoon
His spere it was of fyn cipres — The sheed ful sharp ygrounde
That bowed was and nothyng wes
His steede was al dappull gray — Ful wel corsely and rounde
It goth an Ambil in the way
Loo lordes myne here is a fit — To telle it wol I fonde
If ye wol any more of it
Now holde youre mouth par charite — And herken to my spelle
Bothe knyght and lady free
Of batailles and of chyualry — Anon I wol yow telle
And of ladyes lowe and myry
Now speken of romances of prys — Of reed and of grey
Of horn child and of ypotys
Of bevys and of pleyndamour — Of roial chyualry
But pt Thopas he bereth the flour
His goode steede al he bistrood — As sparcle out of the bronde
And forth vpon his way he rood

Thopas

Upon his creest he bar a tour
And therin stiked a lilie flour
God shilde his cors fro shonde
And for he was a knyght auntrous
He nolde slepen in noon hous
But liggen in his hoode
His bryghte helm was his coniger
And by hym bereth his spere
Of herbes fyne and goode
Hym lest ful wel in every sete
And eek hym lyked wel to ete
Ful ofte
Wel koude he in his lady pleye
And spende and lustily and weye
Of wommen for to winne
Yong was he as is rose in May
This yonge knyght of which I say
Gan pryken up and doune
An hakenay he bestrood that trotte
And forth upon his wey he rotte
Ful many a myle and more
Til on a day

Here the hoost stynteth Chaucer of his tale of Thopas

Ne more of this for goddes dignitee
Quod oure hoost for thou makest me
So wery of thy verray lewednesse
That also wisly god my soule blesse
Myne eres aken of thy drasty speche
Now sikerly I wende that the breche
Thus may wel be ferd quod he
Why so quod I why wiltow lette me
More of my tale than another man
Syn that it is the beste tale I kan
By god quod he for pleynly at a word
Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a tord
Thou dost nought elles but despendest tyme
Sire at o word thou shalt no lenger ryme
Lat se wher thou canst tellen aught in geste
Or telle in prose somwhat at the leste
In which ther be som mirthe or som doctryne
Gladly quod I by goddes dignitee
I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose
That oghte like yow as I suppose
Or elles ete ye been to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it told somtyme in sondry wyse
Of sondry folk as I shal yow devyse
As thus ye woot that every evangelist
That telleth us the peyne of Jhu crist
Record with alle thyng as his felawe doth
But nathelees hir sentence is al sooth
And alle acorden as in hir sentence
Al be they in hir tellyng difference
For som of hem wol have more wordes and som less
Than they his pitous passion expresse
I meene of Mark Matthew Luc and John
But doutelees hir sentence is al oon

Therfore lordynges alle I yow biseche
If pt yow thynke I vayle as in myn speche
Or thus thoughe that I telle conclusyon
Of gentyles than ye han herd bifore
Comth nevere in this litel tretys heere
To enforce with theffect of myn matere
And thoughe I nat the same wordes seye
As ye han herd yet to yow alle I preye
Blameth me nat/ for as in my sentence
Shul ye nowher/ fynden difference
Fro the sentence of this tretys lyte
After the which this myrie tale I write
And therfore herketh/ herteli pt I shal seye
And lat me telle al my tale I preye

Explicit

Here begynneth Chaucers tale of wyfhee

A yong man called walwein mighty and riche begat
upon his wyf that called was Ignorance a doghter
which that called was Sophie. Upon a day bifel pt
he for his desport is went in to the feeldes him to pleye
his wyf and eek his doghter hath he left within his hous of which
the doores keyen faste yshette Thre of hise olde foes han it espyed
and setten laddres to the walles of his hous and by windowes
been entred and betten his wyf and wounded his doghter with
fyve mortal wounides in fyve sondry places This is to seyn in
hir feet in hir handes in hir eyis in hir nose and in hir mouth
and lefton hir for dede and wenten awey Whan walwein is
comen hous in to his hous and sangh al this meschief he lyk a
mad man rentynge his clothes gan to crye and wepe Pryste
er his wyf as ferforth as ever he myghte bisoghte him of his weping
for to stynte but nat for thy he gan to crye and wepen evere lenger
the moore This noble wyf Ignorance remembred hir upon the
sentence of Ovide in his book that cleped is the remedie of love
wher as he seith he is a fool that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in
the deeth of hir child til she have wept hir fille as for a certein
tyme And thanne shal man doon his diligence with amyable
wordes hir to reconforte and preyen hir of hir weping for to
stynte Affter which resoun this noble wyf Ignorance wiped hir
eyen and caste hir heed and wepte as for a certein space and seyde
she sayngh hir tyme ek seyde him in this wise Allas my
lord quod she why make ye youre self for to be lyk a fool for so
litel thyng it apeireth nat to a wys man to maken wrecche youre

doghter with the yre of god shal waysshe and estape and al keye it
so that she nyght nost keye seed ye ne ought nat as for hyr seeth
youre self to sesthore ¶ Seneck seith the wise man shal nat take to ¶ Seneca
grect discomfort for the seeth of his chyldren but shee he shoulde suf
fren it in patience as wel as he abideth the seeth of his owene
gyfte ¶ Thus melibeus answerde anon and seyde ¶ What man ¶ melibeus
quod he sholde of his keeping steute that hath so grect a cause for to
keepe ¶ Ihū crist oure lord hymself kepte for the seeth of lazarus hys ¶ Qualit ihus xpc fleuit mortem lazari
freend ¶ Prudence answerde certes wel / boot attempree kee ¶ Prudence
pyng is no thyng defended to hym p^t sorweful is amonges folk in
sorwe but it is pathey graunted hym to keepe ¶ The apostle paul ¶ Aplus paulus ad romanos
vn to the romayns writeth / man shal reioyse with hem that make
ioye and keepen with wich folk as keepen ¶ But though attempree
kepyng be ygraunted outrageous keepyng ytes is defended / wesshe
of keepyng sholde be considered after the sore p^t teacheth vs seneck
¶ Seneca
¶ Than that thy frend is seed quod he / let nat thyne eyen to moyste keen
of teeris ne to muche dryze al though the teeris come to thyne eyen / let
hem nat falle / and than thou hast for goon thy frend / do diligence
to gete another frend / and this is moore keyndom than for to keepe
for thy frend which that thou hast lorn for they / sume is no boote
And therfore if ye goulde youre hy repreue put awey sorwe out of
youre herte ¶ Remembre youre p^t the wyse seith ¶ a man that is ¶ the wyse
ioyous and glad in herte it hym conserueth florissynge in his age
But sothely sorweful herte / maketh hise bones dryze ¶ The seith eek
thus That sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man ¶ Salomon seith ¶ Salomon
That right as mothes in the shepes flees / anoyeth to the clothes &
the smale wormes to the tree / right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte wher
fore be ogliste as wel in the seeth of oure children / as in the losse of oure
goodes temporels shewe patience ¶ Remembre you vpon the patient ¶ iuy se job
job / whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance and
in his body endured and receyued ful many a grevous tribulacion yet
sayde he thus ¶ Oure lord hath bynome it me right as oure lord hath wold
right so it is doon blessed be the name of oure lord ¶ To thise forseide ¶ Iuelibeus
thynges answerde melibeus vn to his wyf prudence ¶ Allle thy sor
wes quod he been sothe and they seith profitable but trewely myn herte
is troubled with this sorwe so grevously that I woot nat what to doone
¶ Prudence
That calle quod prudence thy trewe freendes alle and thy lynage wyse
the that been wise telleth youre cas and herkeneth what they seye in
counsellyng and yorn goulde after hyr sentence ¶ Salomon seith ¶ Salomon
alle thy thynges by counsel and thou shalt nevere repente ¶ Thanne by
the counseil of his wyf prudence this melibeus sent calleth a grect con
gregacion of folk as surgiens physicyens olde folk and yonge and so
me of his olde enemys reconsiled as by hyr semblant to his loue and
vn to his grace and they seith al they coomen some of hise neighsbores
that diden hym reuerence more for drede than for loue as it happeth ofte
¶ They coomen also ful many subtille flateryes and wise aduocatz ler
ned in the lawe and than this folk togidre assembled keyen this me
libeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas and by the maneye of his

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speche it semed wel that he hete he hadde a coveitous herte redy to don vengeaunce
vpon his foes and obeysaly desired that the cheste sholde biginne but
nathelees yet axed he his counsel vpon this matiere. ¶ A Sire by licen
ce and assent of swiche as been wise vp pose and to yelibeus seyde
as ye may heere ¶ Sire quod he as to vs Sire ciens aparteneth that we do
to euery wight the beste that we kan wher as we been withholde and to oure
paciencz that we do no damage wherfore it happeth many time and ofte
that whan they men han ireyth wounded oother / son same Sire hee
leth hem bothe wherfore vn to oure avt it is nat apriueth to noryce hey
re ne pties to supporte / But certes as to the vengeyng of youre dogh
ter / al be it so that ose pitously be wounded we shullen do so atten
tif bisynesse fro day to nyght that with the grace of god ose shal be
hool and sound as sone as is possible ¶ Almoost wyght in the same
wise the phisiciens answereden / save that they seyden a fewe woordes
more / That right as maladies been cured by her contres / right
so / shul men venge hire by vengeaunce ¶ Hire neighsebores ful
of envye hire feyned frendes that semeden reconsiled / and hire
flatereres maden semblant of wepyng / and enpeireden and aggre
geden muchel of this matiere in preisynge greetly yelibee / of myght
of power / of richesse / and of frendes destruyinge the power of hire
adversaires / and seiden outrely that he anon sholde wreken hym on
hire foes and biginne werre ¶ Up pose thanne an advocat that
was wys by name and by counsel of othere that were wise and sei
de / lordynges the nede for which we been assembled in this pla
ce is a ful heuy thyng and an heigh matiere by cause of the
wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be doon and eek by reson
of the grete damages that in time comynge been possible to fallen
for this same cause and eek by reson of the grete richesse and power
of the parties bothe for the whiche resons it were a ful grete peril to
eschue in this matiere ¶ Wherfore yelibeus this is oure sentence
we counseille yow above alle thyng / that right anon thou do thy
diligence in kepyng of thy propre persone in swich a wise pt thou
wante noon espie ne watche thy persone for to save ¶ And after
that / we counselle pt in thyn hous thou sette sufficeant garnison
so pt they may / as wel thy body as thyn hous defende ¶ But cer
tes / for to moeve werre / or sodeynly for to don vengeaunce / we may
nat deme / in so litel time that it were profitable / Wherfore we
axen leyser and espace / to han deliberacion in this cas to deme /
ffor the comune proverbe seith thus ¶ He that soone demeth /
soone shal repente ¶ And eek men seyn / that thilke juge is
wys that soone understondeth a matiere and juggeth by ley
sir ¶ For al be it so that alle taryyng be anoyful algates it is nat to be
preise in yevynge of juggement ne in vengeance taking whan it is
sufficeant and resonable ¶ And that shewed oure lord ihu crist by ensam
ple / for whan that the womman that was taken in avoutrie was broght
in his presence to knowen what sholde be don with hire persone / al be it so
that he wiste wel hym self what that he sholde answere yet he sholde ho-
nat answere sodeynly but he sholde have deliberacion and in the ground

¶ Here de iudicibz & eorz iudiciis

he hoot ires / and by thise causes he ayen deliberacion / and he shal-
Thanne by the grace of god / conseille thee thyng / that shal be profitable /
Up stirten thanne the yonge folk attones / and the moofte parte of that com-
paignye stroned the olde wise men and bigonnen to make noyse / and sey-
den / that right so as child that newe is boot / men sholden counte / right
so men sholde reken hir wronges while pt they been fleshe and nesshe /
And with loud voys they criden newe newe Up roos tho oon of thise
olde wise / and with his hand made contenaunce / that men sholde holden
hem stille and yeuen hym audience Hardynges quod he they / is ful
many a man / that cryeth newe newe / that foot-ful litel / that newe
amounteth Newe at his bigynnyng / hath so greet an entryng / and so
large / that every wight may entre / whan hym liketh / and lightly fynde
newe / but ores / what ende that shal they / of bifalle / it is nat light to
knowe / For soothly / whan pt newe is ones bigonne / they / is ful many
a child vnborn of his moodes / that shal thenne yong / by cause of that
ilke newe / or elles hym in sorwe / and yvel / and yet therto / and pt
fore er pt any newe bigynne / men moste have greet conseil and greet
deliberacion And whan this olde man / koude no lenger holden his pees / by
lesons / seyl ny alle atones bigonne they to pse for to biseken his tales /
and besen hym ful ofte / his wordes for to abregge / for soothly / he that
biseth to hem / that lysten nat heeren his wordes / his anoy hem anoieth
For thus seyde / that wynde in herynge is anoyous thyng / this
is to seyn / as muche availleth to speken biforn folk / to whiche his ere
ne anoyeth / as it is to seyne / biforn hym that herynge / And this wise
man / saugh / that hym lakked audience / and al shamefast / he sette
hym doun ageyn For Salomon seith / they / as thou ne mayst have
noon audience enforce thee nat to speke / see wel quod this wise
man / pt the comune prouerbe is soothe / That good conseil / lakketh / whan
it is moost Wel hadde this wyf / bewared hir / that secree conseil / many folk / that
priely / in his eere conseilled hym certein thyng / and conseilled hym the
contrarie / in general audience Whan melibee hadde herd / that the
wyseste partie of his conseil / heeren acorded pt he sholde maken warre /
anoon / he conseiled to his conseillyng / and fully affermed his entente /
Thanne dame Prudence / whan pt she saugh / how that hir housbonde
shoop him for to wreken him on his foes / and to bigynne warre / she
/ ful symple / wise / whan she saugh hir time / seide to him thise wor-
des Myn lord quod she / I yow biseche as hertely as I may / and lat
me nat yow nat to faste / and for alle goddes as wolde / in audience
For Piers alfonce seith / who so that soothe to that oothers good or hath / haste
thee nat to quyten it / for / in this wise thy frend / shal abyde / and thyn ene
my shal the lenger / lyve / in wrede The prouerbe seith / he hasteth wel
that wisely kan abyde / and / in wikked haste / is no profit For melibee
answerde / vn to his wyf Prudence I purpose nat quod he to werke
by thy conseil / for many causes and resons For certes / thy wit / wil
be holde me thanne a fool This is to seyn / if I / for thy conseillyng /
sholde chaungen thynges that been ordeyned and affermed by so ma
nye / wise Certeinly I seye that alle / wolden been wikke / a-goon
good of hem alle For of a thousand men seith Salomon / I found a good man

Tyelibee

Thus seyde

Salomon

Tyelibees

Prudence

Pacience

Tyelibee

Ecco pm Salomonem

ynt ftes of alle Wommen goos Woman foons ¶ nede ¶ And also
ceptes If ¶ goones me by thy conseil it sholde seme that ¶ sadde
yeue to thee on me the maistrie And god forbede that it so weere
¶ Thus spak ¶ ffor this spak seith that if the wyf stans maistrie she is contrari
¶ Salomon ous to hir housbonde ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ yeue ñ thy lyf to thy
wyf ne to thy childe ne to thy freend ne yeue no power ouer thy
self ¶ ffor bettre it weere that thy children aske of thy pson thynges
that hem nedeth than thou se thy self ñ the handes of thy childe
¶ And if ¶ sholde weyke by thy counsellyng ceytes my counsellyng
¶ Prudence moste continue be secret til it weere time p^t it moste be knowe
And this ne may nogt be Whanne Dame prudence ful debo
nairly and with gret patience hadde herd al that hir housbonde
liked for to seye ¶ thanne axed she of hym licence for to speke and
seyde ñ this wise ¶ my lord quod she as to youre fyfte reson ¶ etes
it may lightly been answered ¶ ffor ¶ seye that it is no folie to
chaunge counseil ¶ Whan the thyng is chaunged ¶ for elles Whan
the thyng semeth oothey weyes than it was biforn ¶ And moore
ouer ¶ seye that though ye han sworn and bihight to parfourne youre
empryse ¶ And nathelees ye weyue to parfourne thilke empryse
by fyfte cause ¶ men sholde nat seyn t^t they ffor that ye weyue a ley
me for sworn ¶ ffor the book seith p^t the wise man maketh no lesyng
Whan he turneth his corage to the bettre ¶ And al be it so that
youre empryse be establissed and ordeyned by gret multitude of
folk ¶ yet may ye nat accomplice thilke ordinaunce but yow
lyke ¶ ffor the profite of thynges and the profit been ofte sithes fond
den ñ-feble folk that been wise and ful of reson than by gret
multitude of folk they only man cheseth and chargeth Whan that that
hym liketh ¶ Soothly ech with multitude is nat honeste ¶ As to
the seconde reson ¶ Where as ye seyn p^t alle Women been wikke
Saue youre grace ceytes ye despisen alle Wommen ñ this wise ¶ A
Seneca seith that Who so sholde have sapience shal no man despise
but he shal gladly techen the science that he can with outen presumpcion
or pryde and whiche thynges as he nogt ne kan he shal nat been a
shamed to lerne hem and enquere of lasse folk than hym self ¶ And
ek ¶ that they hath been many a good Woman may lightly be preued
¶ ffor ectes ek oure lord ihu crist sholde nede have descended to be born
of a Woman if alle Women hadden been wikke and after that for
the grete bountee that is ñ Women oure lord ihu crist Whan he was
risen shoodeth to shewe appeered rather to a Woman than to his
apostles ¶ And though that Salomon seith that he ne found nede
Woman good it folweth nat therfore that alle Women been wikke
ffor though that he ne found no good Woman ¶ etes ful many another
man hath founden many a Woman ful good And therefore ¶ Or elles p
Auenture the entente of Salomon was this that as ñ couetyse bountee
he found no Woman this is to seyn that they is no wight p^t hath
couetyse bountee saue god allone as he hym self recordeth ñ his
Euangelie ffor they nys no creature so good that hym ne fauteth
ought that of the perfection of god that is his maker ¶ Youre

thynke reson is this ¶ Sye seyn / if ye gouerne youre by my counseil / it
shulde seme that ye hadde yeue me the maistrie / and the lordshipe
ouer youre psone. Sire seme youre grace / it is nat so / for if it were
so that no man shulde be counsilled / but oonly of hem that hadden
lordshipe and maistrie of his psone / men sholden nat be counselled so
ofte / for soothly / thilke man that asketh counseil of a nyghtes / yet hath
he free choyse / wheither he wole werke by that counseil or noon ¶ And
as to youre fourthe reson / there ye seyn pt the tongue of wommen
hath thre thynges that they liste nought. as she seith / that a woman
kan nat hyde that she woot ¶ Sire thise wordes been vnderstonde of
men pt been tongelesse and likked / of whiche women men seyn
that thre thynges dryuen a man out of his hous ¶ that is to seyn
smoke / droppyng / of reyn / and likked wyues / and whiche wommen
seith salomon / pt it were bettre dwelle in desert / than with a woman
that is motous ¶ And sire by youre leue / that am nat I / for ye han
ful ofte assayed myn grete silence / and myn grete patience / and eek
how wel that I kan hyde and hele thynges / that men ought secrely
to hyde ¶ And soothly as to youre fifthe reson / where as ye seyn /
that in likked counseil / wommen venquisshe men ¶ god woot thilke
reson stant heere in no stede / for vnderstoond wel / ye aske counseil
to do likkednesse / and if ye wole werken likkednesse / and youre wyf
restreyneth thilke likked wyl / and counceilleth yow by reson and by
good counseil / certes youre wyf ought rather to be preised / than yblа
med ¶ Thus sholde ye vnderstonde the philosophre / that seith / in lik
ked counseil / women venquisshen hir housbondes ¶ And they as ye
blamen alle wommen and hir resons / I shal shewe yow by many
ensamples / that many a woman hath ben ful good / and yet been /
hir counseils ful hoolsome and profitable ¶ Eek certes men shul wyte /
that the counseilynge of women is outher to deere / or elles to litel of
pris ¶ But al be it so / pt ful many a woman is badde and hir counseil
vile and nought worth / yet han men founde ful many a good woman
and ful discrete and wys in counseillynge ¶ loo Jacob / by good counseil
of his moodey Rebekka wan the benysoun of ysaak his fadey / and
the lordshipe ouer alle his bretheren ¶ Judith by hir good conseil
delyuered the citee of Bethulie in which she dwelled / out of the han
des of Olofernus / that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed
it ¶ Abygail delyuered Nabal hir housbonde fro Dauid the kyng /
that wolde have slayn hym / and apaysed the ire of the kyng by
hir wit / and by hir good counseillyng ¶ Hester enhaunced greetly
by hir good conseil the peple of god / in the regne of Assuerus the
kyng ¶ And the same bountee in good counseillyng of many a good
woman may men telle ¶ And moore ouer wot man oure lord
hadde creat Adam oure forme fadey / he seyde in this wise / It is
nat good to been a man allone / make we to hym an help sembla
ble to hym self ¶ Heere may ye se / that if that women were
nat goode and hir counseils goode & profitable / oure lord god of heue
ne / wolde nevere han wrought hem / ne called hem / help of man /
but rather confusion of man ¶ And they seyde oones a clerk in

¶ Of .iij. thynges pt dryuen a man out of his hous

¶ Salomon

¶ Nero de Rebekka

¶ De Judith

¶ De Abygail

¶ De Hester

Tryelbee

Salomon

Ydence

Thobias

Thus Jacobus

Of .iij. thynges pt been
contrarie to good counseil

Seneca

Aplius

thes ben / What is bettre than gold? Jaspre / What is bettre than Jaspre?
Wisedom / And What is bettre than Wisedom? Wommen. And wher
is bettre than a good Woman? no thyng / And lo / by manye of othre
resons / may ye seen that manye Wommen been goode / and hir counseils
goode and profitable / and therfore lo / if ye wol. tryste to my counseil /
I shal restoore yow / youre doghter / hool and sounde / and eek /
wol go to yow so muche / that ye shul have honour in this cause.
Whan tryelbee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence /
he seyde thus / Ne wel that the word of Salomon is sooth / he seith
that wordes pt been spoken discretly by ordinaunce been honycombes
hes for they yeven swetnesse to the soule and hoolsomnesse to
the body / And wyf / by cause of thy discrete wordes / and eek for /
have assayed and preved thy grete sapience / and thy grete trouthe /
I wol governe me by thy counseil in alle thyng / Now lo quod
Dame Prudence / and syn ye vouche sauf to been governed by my con
seil / I wol enforme yow / how ye shul governe youre self in thes yn
ge of youre counsellours / ye shul first in alle youre werkes / me
kely biseken to the heighe god / pt he wol be youre counsellor / and pro
pose yow / to swich entente / that he yeve yow counseil and confort /
as taughte Thobie his sone / At alle tymes / thou shalt blesse god
and preye him / to dresse thy weyes / and looke / pt alle thy counseils
been in him for evermore / Wel / quod she eek / If any of yow
have nede of sapience / axe it of god / And afterward thanne shul
ye taken counseil of youre / and examyne wel youre thoghtes / of swich
thyng / as yow thynketh pt is best for youre profit / And thanne shul ye
shewe to youre hevte / thise thynges that been contrarious to good conseil /
That is to seyn / Ire / coveitise / and hastifnesse / And first / he pt axeth counseil
of him self / ought / he moste been ful of ire / for manye causes / the
firste is this / he pt hath wil / and purpose in him self / he shoop
wel pt he may do thyng / that he may not do / And certainly /
he that is irous and wrooth / he ne may not wel deme / And he pt may
not wel deme / may not wel counseille / Another thynge is this / that he pt
is irous and wrooth / as ofte / wenet / ne may not speke / but he blame
thynges / and pt is vicious wordes / he stireth oothre folk / to angre
and to ire / And eek lo / ye moste drawe coveitise out of youre herte /
for the apostle seith / that coveitise is roote of alle harmes / and trust /
wel / that a coveitous man ne kan nogat deme ne thynke / but only /
to fulfille the ende of his coveitise / And certes / that no may nedes been
accomplissed / for ende / the more habundance pt he hath of richesse / the
more he desireth / And lo / ye moste also drawe out of youre herte /
hastifnesse / for certes / ye may not deme for the beste / by a sodeyn
thought / that falleth in youre herte / but ye moste avise yow ofte in
ful ofte / for as ye herde biforn / the comune prudhe is this / that he pt
soone demeth / soone repenteth / lo / ye ne be nat reckeles in yvel
disposicion / for certes / som thyng / pt somtyme semeth to yow / that it /
is good for to do / another-tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie / than ye
han taken counseil of youre self / and han demed by good deliberacion /
swich thyng / as you list best / Thanne rede I yow / that ye kepe it /

seyde/ wherby nat ȝoure conseil to no ꝑsone/ but if so be that ye beleeue
sikerly/ that thurgh ȝoure bikeyyng/ ȝoure condicion/ shal be to yow
the moore ꝓfitable ¶ Thus seyde dame/ mathey to thy foo ne to thy frend
discouere nat thy seruice ne thy folie/ for they wol ȝeue ȝow audience and
lookynge to supportacion in thy ꝑsence/ and scorne thee in thyn absence
¶ Another clerk seith/ that straysly shaltou fynden any ꝑsone/ that may
kepe conseil sikerly ¶ The book seith/ whil ꝑt thou kepest thy conseil
in thyn herte/ thou kepest it in thy ꝑson/ and whan thou bikeyest/
thy conseil to any wight/ he holdeth thee in his snare ¶ And therfore
ȝow is bettre to hyde ȝoure conseil in ȝoure herte/ than ꝓiaye hem/ to
whom ye han bikeyen ȝoure conseil/ that he wole kepen it cloos &
stille ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ ffy on be/ ꝑt thou ne mayst nat thyn owne
ne conseil hyde/ how darstou ꝓiayen any oother wight/ thy conseil si
kerly to kepe ¶ But nathelees/ yf thou wene sikerly/ ꝑt the bikeyeyng
of thy conseil to a ꝑsone/ wol make thy condicion to stonden in the bet
tre plyt/ thanne shaltou tellen hym thy conseil in this wise ¶ ffirst/
thou shalt make no semblant/ wherthey thee keye leue pees or keyre/
or this or that/ ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente/ ffor
tyrst wel/ ꝑt toeli thise conseillours been flateroures/ namely the conseilles
of grete lordes/ for they enforcen hem alwey/ wayes to speken plesante
wordes enclynynge to the lordes lust/ than wordes ꝑt been honeste or ꝓfi
table ¶ And therfore men seyn/ ꝑt the riche man hath seeld good conseil
but if he have it of hym self ¶ And after that/ thou shalt considere
thy freendes and thyne enemys/ And as touchynge thy freendes/
thou shalt considere/ whiche of hem/ ꝑt been moost feithful and moost
wise/ and eldest/ and moost approued in conseillynge/ and of hem shalt
thou aske thy conseil/ as the cas requireth ¶ I seye/ ꝑt first/ ye shul
clepe to ȝoure conseil ȝoure freendes that been trewe ¶ ffor Salomon
seith/ ¶ that right as the herte of a man deliteth in swetnesse/ ꝑt is soote
right so/ the conseil of trewe freendes ȝeueth swetnesse to the soule/
¶ He seith also ¶ whey may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend/ for ther
gold ne siluer/ beth nat so muche worth as the goode wyl of a trewe
freend ¶ And eek he seith/ that a trewe freend is a stronge defense/ wher
so ꝑt hym fyndeth/ certes he fyndeth a greet tresour ¶ Thanne shul
ye eek considere/ if that ȝoure trewe freendes been discrete and wise/
¶ ffor the book seith/ axe alwey thy conseil of hem ꝑt been wise/ And by
this same reson/ shul ye clepen to ȝoure conseil of ȝoure freendes that
been of age/ swiche as han seyn and been expert/ in many thynges/
and been approued in conseillynges ¶ ffor the book seith/ that in the
olde men is the sapience/ and in long tyme the prudence ¶ And
Tullius seith/ that grete thynges ne been nat ay accomplisced by
strengthe/ ne by delitesse of body/ but by good conseil/ by aucto
rite of ꝑsones and by science/ the whiche thre thynges/ ne been
nat fieble by age/ but rather they enforcen and encreescen day by day/
And thanne/ shul ye kepe this/ for a general reule ¶ ffirst/ shul ye cle
pen to ȝoure conseil a fewe of ȝoure freendes that been especials/ for
Salomon seith ¶ many freendes haue thou/ but among a thousand
chese thee oon/ to be thy conseillour/ ffor al be it so/ that thou first ne

telle thy counseil but to a felle thou maiyst afterward telle it to mo folk
if it be nede but loke alwey that thy counsellours haue thilke thre condi
cions pt I haue seid biforе that is to seyn that they be trewe and wise and
of olde experience and evere mat alwey in everyy nede by hem counselle
allone Forthy seith Salomon seith Salvacion of thy nedes is there as they been many
counsellers Forth I haue told yow of which folk ye shulde been
counselled Nowe forth I telle yow which counseil ye ought to eschewe
First ye shul eschue the counsellyng of fooles For Salomon seith take
no counseil of a fool for he can nought counselle but after his owene
lust and his affection The book seith that the vertue of a fool is
this he troweth lightly harm of everyy wight and lightly troweth alle
bountee in hymself Thou shalt eek eschue the counsellyng of flatte
reres whiche as enforcen hem rather to preise youre persone by flatteryes
than for to telle yow the soothfastnesse of thynges Therfore Tullius
seith Amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe the grettеste
is flaterie and therfore is it most nede pt thou eschue and drede flatte
reres than any other pestilence The book seith thou shalt rather drede
and flee fro the sweete wordes of flatteryinge preyseres than fro
the egre wordes of thy freend that seith thee thy sothes Salomon
seith that the wordes of a flatterer is a snare to cacche with in
nocents He seith also that he pt preiseth his freend wordes of
swetnesse and of plesaunce setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche
him And therfore seith Tullius eschue nat thyne eyes to fla
tereres ne taketh no counseil of the wordes of flatteryе And Cal
ton seith Avoyde thee evel and eschue the wordes of swetnesse
and of plesaunce And eek thou shalt eschue the counsellyng
of thyne olde enemyes that been reconsiled The book seith that
no knight retourneth agayn in to the grace of his olde enemy
And Ovide seith ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had som
tyme werre or enemytee ne telle hem nat thy counseil And Se
neca telleth the cause why For nat may nat be seith he that
grete fyre hath longe tyme endured that there ne dwelleth som
hoote of brondes And therfore seith Salomon In thyn ol
de foo trust nevere For likely though thyn enemy be reconsiled
and maketh thee cheere of humylitee and loveth to thee with his
heed ne trust hym nevere For certes he maketh thilke feyned humi
litee more for his profit than for any love of thy persone by cause
that he demeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned
contenaunce the which victorie he myghte nat have by strif or
werre And peter alfonce seith make no felaweshipe with thyne
olde enemyes For if thou do hem bountee they wol pirten it in to vil
leynesse And eek thou most eschue the counsellyng of hem that
been thy servauntz and beren thee grete reverence for peraventure they
doon it more for drede than for love And therfore seith a philo
losophre in this wyse They is no knight profitably tweke to hymself pt he
to sore dredeth And Tullius seith They nys no myghty man so grete
of any empire that longe may endure but if he have more lo

Salomon

Salomon
Of counsellours pt a man
oghte to eschue

Tullius

Catto

Seneca

Salomon

Petrus alfonce

Ovidius
Tullius

¶ Tisebee ~

ne of the peple than for drede ¶ Thou shalt also estime the counselling
of folk that been dronke ek̄e for they kan no counsail hyde ¶ For Salo
mon seith they is no pryuetee there as regneth dronkenesse ¶ Ye shul ¶ Salomon ~
also han in suspect the counsellyng of ech folk. as counsaile yow
a thyng priuely and counsailo yow the contrayre openly ¶ For Cassio
ne seith that it is a maner sleghte to hyndre ehan he seeketh to ¶ Cassiodorus ~
doon a thyng openly and secketh priuely the contrayre ¶ Thou shalt
also han in suspect the counsellyng of wikked folk. for the book
seith the counsellyng of wikked folk is alwey ful of fraude ¶ And
Dauid seith blisful is that man pt̄ hath nat folwed the counsellyng ¶ Dauid ~
of shrewes ¶ Thou shalt also eschue the counsellyng of yong
folk. for hir counsail is nat ripe ¶ Loke eke seith I haue shewed
yow of ech folk ye shul take youre counsail and of ech folk
ye shul folwe the counsail. wel I teche yow how ye shal exa
mine youre counsail after the doctrine of Tullius ¶ In the exami ¶ How a man shal examine his
nynge thanne of youre counsellour ye shul considre manye thyn counsellours after the doctrine of Tullius ~
ges ¶ Aldirfirst thou shalt considre pt̄ in thilke thyng that thou
purposest and vpon ehat thyng thou wolt haue counsail pt̄ alle
thoughtes beseyd and conseyued this is to seyn tellen therby thy
tale ¶ For he that seith fals may nat wel be counselled in that cas
of ech̄ he lieth ¶ And after this thou shalt considre the thyn
ges pt̄ acorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy counsellours
if reson acorde hem to. and eek if thy myght may attayne hem to
and if the moore part and the bettre part of thy counsellours acor
de hem to or noon ¶ Thanne shaltou considre ehat thyng shal
folwen after hir counsellyng. as hate pees ehe̊ grace profit
or damage and manye othere thynges ¶ Thanne of alle thise
thynges thou shalt chese the beste and weyue alle othere thyn
ges ¶ Thanne shaltou considre of ehat roote is engendred
the matere of thy counsail and ehat fruyt it may conceyue and
engendre ¶ Thou shalt eek considre alle thise causes. to ehen
nes they been enrouted ¶ And ehan ye han examyned youre
counsail as I haue seyd and ech̄ parte is the bettre and moore
profitable and hast approued it by many ehe folk and clerc than
ne shaltou considre it thou mayst presume it and maken of it a
good ende ¶ For eches persone wol nat that any man sholde bigynne
a thyng. but if he myghte presume it as hym oghte ¶ And no-
thyng sholde take vp on hym so heuy a charge that he myghte ¶ prud ~
nat beren it ¶ For the prudent seith he that to muche vnderta ¶ Cato ~
keth hym litel ¶ And Catoun seith ¶ Assay to do ech̄ thyng. as
thou hast power to doon lest that the charge oppresse thee. so soore
that thee bihoueth to weyue thyng that thou hast bigonne and
if so be pt̄ thou be in doute ehether thou mayst presume a thyng ¶ Petrus Alfonce ~
or noon ehese rather to suffre than bigynne ¶ And Petre Alfons
seith ¶ If thou hast myght to doon a thyng of ech̄ thou most
repente thee it is bettre may than ye ¶ This is to seyn that thee
is bettre holde thy tonge stille than for to speke ¶ Thanne
may ye vnderstonde by strenger resons that if thou hast go

Sey to ꝑsone a thyng of which thou shalt repente / thanne is it bette that thou suffre thanne bigynne / Wel seyn they yt defenden euery wight to assaye any thyng of which he is in doute / wherthey he may ꝑforne it or noon / and after / whan ye han examyned youre conseil as I shal seye bifore / than wel that ye may ꝑforme youre emprise confermen it thanne oonly til it be at an ende Now is it resonable tyme pt I shewe yow why and wherfore that ye may chaunge youre conseillouns / with outen youre repreue Soothly a man may chaungen his ꝓpos and his conseil if the cause cesseth / or whan a newe cas bitydeth for the lawe seith that upon thinges pt nedely bityden / bihoueth nedes conseil to chaunge / and eueri thyng that is chaunged is to the repreue of thyn enemy whan ge thy conseil Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil / If so be that thou mayst fynde that by enemy or by other cause harm or damage may bityde Also / if thy conseil be dishoneste or elles cometh of dishoneste cause / chaunge thy conseil / for the lawes seyn / that alle bihestes that been dishoneste / been of no valu And eek / If so be / pt it be impossible or may nat goodly be ꝑformed or kept / And take this for a general reule / that eueri conseil pt is affermed so stronglyl / that it may nat be chaunged for no condicion that may bityde / save pt thilke conseil is wikked

Tyelbeus whan a man may chaunge his conseillouns with outen repreue

Thenecia

Tyelbeus his deliberacion / whan he had herd the doctrine of his wyf dame ꝓpudence / answerede in this wyse Dame quod he as yet in to this tyme / ye han wel and vertuously taught me as in general / how I shal governe me in the chesynge and in the withholdynge of my conseillours / but nathelees I fayn that ye wolde condescende in especial / and telle me how liketh yow or what semeth yow by oure conseillours that we han chosen in oure present nede My lord quod she / I biseke yow in al humblesse that ye nat wilfully replie ageyn my resons no displesaunce yow seyte though I speke thyng that yow displese / for god woot / that as in myn entente / I speke it / for youre beste / for youre honour and for youre profite eke And soothly I hope that youre benyngnytee wol taken it in patience

Tprudence

Displeseth me wel quod she that youre conseil as in this cas ne sholde nat as to speke ꝓpurly be calles a conseillyng / but a motion or a moevyng of folye in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise First and forward / ye han erred in thassemblynge of youre conseillours / for ye sholde first han cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil and after ye myghte han shewed it to mo folk if it hadde been nede / But certes ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of people ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to here Also / ye han erred / for there as ye sholden oonly han cleped to youre conseil youre trewe freendes olde and wise / ye han ycleped straunge folk and yong folk / false flatereres and enemys reconsiled / and folk pt doon yow reuerence with outen love And eek also / ye han erred / for ye han broght in youre conseil / the / coueitise / and hastifnesse / the which thre thinges been conthraire to eny conseil honeste and profitable / the which thre ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem neither in youre self / ne in youre conseillours as yow oghte / ye han erred also / for ye han shewed

¶ Melibee ms

to youre counsellours / youre talent / and youre affection / to make Crey
anon / and for to do vengeance they han espied by youre wordes to cast
thyng / ye been entyned / and they fore han they rather counselled yow
to youre talent / than to youre profit ¶ ye han eyes also / for it semeth / pt
it suffiseth / to han been counselled by thise counsellours oonly / and Crip
stes Auys / Crey as mi so greet / and so heigh a nede / it hadde been neces
sarie no counsellours and moore deliberacion / to take youre entrpse
¶ ye han eyes also / for ye ne han nat examyned youre counsel / in the forsey
de manere ne in due maner as the cas requireth ¶ ye han eyes also / for
ye han nat maked no divisioun bitwixe youre counsellours ¶ this is to
seyn / bitwixen youre trewe freendes / and youre feyned counsellours
ne ye han nat knowe the wil of youre trewe freendes / olde and wise
but ye han cast alle hire wordes in an hochepot / and enclyned youre
herte to the moore parte / and to the gretter nombre / and Crey been yow
condescended ¶ and certes ye woot wel pt men shal alwey finde a
gretter nombre of fooles than of wise men / and Crey fore the counseils
that been at congregations and multitudes of folk / Crey as men ta
ke moore reward to the nombre than to the sapience of persones / ye
wel / that in Crilke counsellynges / foles han the maistrie ¶ Melibe ms Melibeus
answerde again / and seyde / I graunte wel that I have eyen / but the
ye as thou hast toold me Crey-biforn / pt he nys nat to blame pt chaun
geth his counsellours in certein cas / and for certeine juste causes ¶
am al redy to chaunge my counsellours / right as thow wolt desire ms
¶ Crise prudence / that for to do synne is manyssh / but certes for ms Prudence
to persevere longe in synne / is werk of the devel ¶ To this sentence
answereth anon dame prudence and seyde ¶ Examineth wel what ms Prudence
youre counseil / and lat us see / the cheef of hem / han spoken mos
reasonably / and taught yow best counseil / And for as muche as pt
the examynacion is necessarie / lat us bigynne at the surgiens
and at the physiciens / that first / speken in this matiere / and seye
yow / that the surgiens and physiciens / han seyd yow in youre
counseil discreetly / as hem oughte ¶ And in hire speche seyde ful
wisely / that to the office of hem aparteneth to doon to every wight hon
and profit / and no wight for to anoye / and in hire craft / to doon greet di
ligence unto the cure of hem / whiche pt they han in hire governaunce
and wel / right as they han answered wisely and discreetly / right so
wene I / that they been heighly and covenably guerdoned for hire noble
speche / and eek / for they sholde do the moore entierly bisynesse in
the curacion of youre doghter deere / Forwhi al be it so / pt they been
youre freendes / therfore shal ye nat suffren / that they serve
yow for noght / but ye oghte the rather guerdone hem and the
the hem / youre largesse ¶ And as touchynge the question ms
which that the physiciens encreesteden in this cas / this is to
seyn / that in maladies / that oon contrarie is cast by another
contrarie / I wolde fayn knowe / how ye understonde this text /
and what is youre sentence ¶ certes quod Melibeus / I un ms Melibeus
derstonde it in this wise / that right as they han doon me a wrong
me / right so / sholde I doon hem another / For right as they han

Chaucer

vengeth hem on me and doon me right so shal I vengen me up-
on hem and doon hem wrong. And thanne sayde I cupes don contrayre by
another. Lo quod dame prudence lordes lightly is euery man enclí
ned to his owene profit and to his owene plesance. Certes quod she the
lordes of the ptsistaens ne sholde nat han been vnderstonden in thyys
caas. ffor dedes of rihtwisnesse is nat contrarie to rihtwisnesse ne vengeance
to vengeance ne wrong to wrong. but they been semblable. And
therfore vengeance is nat rehercised by another vengeance ne
wrong by another wrong. but euerich of hem encreesseth and agreg
geth other. But dedes the lordes of the ptsistaens sholde been vnder
stonden in this caas. ffor good and rihtwisnesse been two contrayres
and pees and werre vengeance and vnpitaunce distorben and acorden
manye other thynges. But dedes rihtwisnesse shal be rehercised by
goodnesse distorbed by accord werre by pees and so forth of other thynges
and herby is accordeth dame Prudence the Apostle in manye places. She seith
ne yeldeth nat harm for harm ne vilayne for vilayne ne vilayne speche for vilayne speche
but do wel to hym pt doth thee harm and bless hym pt seith to thee
harm. And in manye other places she amonesteth pees and accord. But
nowe shal I speke to yow of the counseil which pt was yeuen to yow by
the men of lawe and the wise folk that seyden alle by oon accord as ye
han herd biforen. That on alle thynges ye sholde doon youre diligence
to kepen youre persone and to rehercen youre hous. And seyden also
that in this caas yow oghten for to herken ful auysely and wt greet de-
liberacion. And sire as to the firste point. that toucheth to the kee
pyng of youre persone ye shul vnderstonde that he pt hath werre shal
enemoore meekely and debonairly pleyen biforn alle thynges that he
cnst of his grete mercy wol han him in his protection and been his so
uereyn helpyng at his nede. ffor certes in this world there is no rihtful
that may be conseilled ne kept sufficeauntly without the kepyng of
oure lord Jhu crist. To this sentence accordeth the prophete dauid that
seith. If god ne kepe the citee the vigil watcheth he that it kepeth. Now
sire thanne shul ye committe the kepyng of youre persone to youre trewe
freendes that been approued and knowe. And of hem shul ye axen
help youre persone for to kepe. ffor catoun seith. If thou hast nede of
help axe it of thy freendes. ffor they wyle been so good a ptsistaen as
thy trewe freendes. And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle
chaunges folk and fro shrewes and hanne alwey in suspect hire compaig
nye. ffor preye alfonce seith. Ne take no compaignye by the weye
of straunge men but if so be pt thou hanne knowe hym of a lengere ty
me. And if so be that he be falle in to thy compaignye paventure ert
outen thym assaut enquere thanne as subtilly as thou mayst of his
condicion and of his lyf biforn and feyne thy weye. seye that thou
goost thidre as thou wolt nat go and if he keepeth a strepe hoold thee
on the rihte syde and if he bere a sheeld hoold thee on his lift syde.
And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow wisely from alle wikked men
nere people as I hanne seyd biforn and hem and hir conseilleres eschewe.
And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow in eschewinge that for a
ny presumpcion of youre strengthe that ye ne despise nat ne acounte

Prudence

Paulus apostis

Dauid apostis

Cato

Petrus alfonce

¶ Melibee

nat the myght of youre aduersaryes / so litel / that ye lete / the kepyng
of youre persone / for youre presumption / for euery wys man / dredeth his
enemy ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ Wel is hym / that of alle hath dre ¶ Salomon
de / for ceptes / so that thurgh the hardynesse of his herte / and thurgh
the hardynesse of hym self / hath to greet presumption / hym shal
nel bityde ¶ Thanne / shul ye eke moore counterwayte embusshe
mentz and alle espiailles ¶ For oones seith ¶ that the wise man / he ¶ Seneca
dredeth harmes / ne he ne falleth nat into perils / that perils eschueth / and
al be it so / pt it semed that thou art / in sikernesse place / yet shaltou
alwey do thy diligence in kepynge of thy persone ¶ This is to seyn
ne be nat necligent / to kepe thy persone / nat oonly / for thy grettestes
enemys / but for thy leeste enemy ¶ Hugo seith / that the litel ¶ Hugo
wesels / wol sle the grete bole / and the wilde hert ¶ And the book /
seith / a litel thorn / may prikke a greet kyng ful soore / and an
hound / wol holde the wilde boor ¶ But natheles / I sey nat / thou
shalt be recreaunt / that thou doute / ther / wher as is no drede ¶ The
book seith / that oonly fooles / han greet lust to deceyue / but yet / they
dreden hem to be deceyued ¶ Yet shaltou drede / to been empoysoned /
and kepe yow / from the compaignye of straungers ¶ For the book seith /
With straungers make no compaignye / but flee hir wordes as the
pestilence ¶ Ouer al as to the seconde point ¶ Where as youre wise
counseillours counseilled yow to stanche youre hous / with greet
diligence ¶ I. Holde fayn knowe / how that ye vnderstonde this
ilke wordes / and what is youre sentence ¶ Melibeus answerde ¶ Melibeus
and seyde ¶ certes I vnderstande it in this wise ¶ That I shal
stanchen myn hous / with toures / whiche as han castelles
and othere manere edifices / and armure / and artelryes / by which
the thynges / may myn persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden
that myne enemys / shul been in drede / myn hous for to approche
¶ To this sentence answerde anon prudence / stanchynge ¶ Prudence
that of heighe toures and of grete edifices / with grete costages
and with greet travaille / han that they been accomplices / yet
ne they nat worth a thee but if they be defended by trewe freendes
that been olde and wise ¶ And vnderstonde wel / that the grettestes ¶ Nero / of the strongeste garnysoun
and the strongeste garnysoun / that a prince may have / as wel to de that may be
fenden his persone as his goodes / is that he be biloued among his
subgetz and with his neighebores ¶ For thus seith Tullius ¶ that ¶ Tullius
ther / is a manere garnysoun / that no man may venquysse ne disconfite and that is / a lord to be biloued of his citezeins and of his pe
ple ¶ Now ar ye / as to the thridde point / where as youre olde and
wise counseillours seyden / that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily
proceden in this nede / but that yow oghte purveyen and apparaillen
yow in this cas with greet diligence and greet deliberacion ¶ the
wel / I holde that they seyden right wisely and right sooth ¶ For ¶ Tullius
Tullius seith / In euery nede / er thou bigynne it / apparaille thee ¶ Tullius
greet diligence ¶ Thanne seye I / that in vengeance taking / in bat
ayle / in batailles / and in stanchynge / er thow bigynne I rede pt
thou apparaille thee ther to / and do it with greet deliberacion

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+

Tullius
Cassiodorus

Affor Tullius seith the longe apparillyng biforn the batailles maketh short victorie. And Cassiodorus seith the garnyson is stronger, whan it is longe tyme auysed. But nowe lat vs speken of the counseil that was areysed by youre neighebores, whiche as doon yowe perilous withouten lone, youre olde enemys personiles, youre flatereres, that counsilled yowe thynges fraely, and openly, counsilleden yowe the contrarie. The yonge folk also, that counselleden yowe to longe yowe, and make delle anon. And certes sire, as I haue seyd biforn, ye han greetly nede to han trewe, wise, and mature folk, to youre counseil, whiche counsilles been ynough despreued by the resons aforeseyd. But natheles, lat vs nowe descende to the speciales. The whiche first preeue after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the thynges of this matiere, or of this counseil, nedeth nat diligently enquere, for it is del first, whiche they been that shal doon to yowe this trespas and vilenye, and howe many trespassours and in what maneres they han to yowe doon al this grong and al this vilenye. And after this thanne shul ye examyne the ordre or degree, which that the same Tullius addeth in this matiere. Affor Tullius put a thyng, which that he clepeth consentynge, this is to seyn, who been they and howe many that consenten to thy counseil in thy wikkednesse to doon hastif vengeance. And lat vs considere also who been they and howe many been they, and whiche been they, that consenteden to youre aduersaries. And certes, as to the firste point it is del knowen whiche folk been they, that consenteden to youre hastif wilfulnesse, for trewely, alle tho that counselleden yowe to maken oddeyn ne been nat youre freendes. That vs nowe to slepe, whiche been they, that ye holde so greetly youre freendes, as to youre persone. Affor al be it so that yo be myghty and riche, yet ne been nat but allone, for ded, ye ne han no child but a doghter, ne ye ne han brethren ne cosyns germayns, ne noon other neighe kynrede, whom men sholde drede to plede with yowe, or despoyle youre persone. Ye knowen also that youre richesses mowen been despended in diuerse parties, and whan a man is out of sight, anon is out of mynde. They ne wollen taken but litel reward to quyte thy deeth. But thyne enemys been tho, and they han many children, brethren, cosyns, and other kynrede, and though so were that thou hadde slayn of hem .vj. or .vij. yet desiren they ynowe to wreken his deeth, and to sle thy persone. And though so be that youre kynrede be moore siker, and stedefast than the kyn of youre aduersaire, yet natheles youre kynrede mye but a fewe kynrede they been, but litel eyde to yowe, and the kyn of youre enemys been ny eyde to hem, and certes, as in that sentence is set thanne youres. Whanne lat vs considere also, if the counsellyng of hem that counselleden yowe to taken oddeyn vengeance, whether it accorde to reson. And certes, ye knowe wel nay, for as by right and reson they may no man taken vengeance on no wight, but the juge that hath the jurisdiction of it. Than it is graunted hym to take thilke vengeance hastily or attemprely as the lawe requireth. And yet moore oold of thilke word that Tullius clepeth consentynge, thou shalt considere, if thy myght and

thy power may consenten and suffise to thy wilfulnesse and to thy counsailles
and ches thou mayst well eyn that may ¶ For certeyn as for to speke propreliche
he may do no thyng but only such thyng as he may deen rightfully
and ches rightfully ne moste ye take no vengeance as of youre owne
auctorite ¶ thanne moste ye seen that youre power ne consenteth nat
ne accordeth nat with youre wilfulnesse ¶ that is now examyne the
thridde point that Tullius clepeth consequent ¶ thou shalt understonde
that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent and
they of soldreth another vengeance pil and pyllo and other damages
with outen nombre of whiche he ne roghte nat as at this tyme ¶ and
as touchyng the fourthe point that Tullius clepeth engendrynge
thou shalt considere that this thyng which that is doon to thee is en
gendred of the hate of thyne enemys and of the vengeance takynge up
on that sholde engendre another vengeance and muchel sorwe and bes
tynge of richesses as I seyde ¶ Now sire as to the point that Tullius
clepeth causes which that is the laste point thou shalt understonde pt
the thyng that thou hast receyued hath seuene causes whiche pt clerkes
clepen Causa efficiens and Causa sine qua non and Causa propinqua
qua and this is to seyn the fer cause and the ny cause ¶ the fer cause is al
myghty god that is cause of alle thynges ¶ the ner cause is thy thre
enemys ¶ the cause accidental was hate ¶ the cause material been the
fyue wowndes of thy doghter ¶ the cause formal is the manere of thy
werkynge that broghten lasshes and clommben nat with thy fyngres
the cause final was for to sle thy doghter and nat in as muche as
in hem was ¶ but for to speken of the fer cause as to what ende they
shul come or what shal finally bityde of hem in this cas ne kan I
nat deeme but by conjectynge and by supposynge ¶ for he shal suppo
se that they shul come to a wikked ende by cause that the book of
decrees seith seelden or with grete peyne been causes ybrought to
good ende whanne they been badly bigonne ¶ Now sire if men
sholde aye me why that god suffred men to do yow this vilenye:
certes I kan nat wel answere as for no sothfastnesse ¶ for the prophete
seith that the sentences and the juggements of oure lord god almyghty
been ful deepe they may no man comprehende ne serchen hem sufficiantly
¶ Natheles by certeyne presumptions and conjectynges I holde and
bileeue that god which that is ful of justice and of rightwisnesse
hath suffred this bityde by juste cause resonable ¶ thy name is ayeli
lee this is to seyn a man that displeseth lony ¶ thou hast ydronke
so muchel lony of sweete temporeel richesses and delices and honor
of this world that thou art dronken and hast forgeten thy crist
thy creatour thou ne hast nat doon to hym with lony and re
uerence as thee oughte me thou ne hast nat wel ytaken kepe to
the wordes of Ouide ¶ that seith vndre the hony of the goodes
of the body is hyd the venym that sleeth the soule ¶ and salo
mon seith ¶ if thou hast founden hony ete of it that suffiseth for
if thou ete of it out of mesure thou shalt spewe and be nedy and
poure and yet ouermore crist hath thee in despit and hath turned
away fro thee his face and his eres of misericorde ¶ and also he hath

¶ In libro de vetula

¶ Ouidius

¶ Salomon

suffres / that thou hast been punysshed in the maner that thou hast
ytrespassed ¶ Thou hast don synne / agayn oure lord crist. ffor ther
the. iij. enemys of mankynde / that is to seyn / the flesshe / the feend
and the worlde / thou hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn herte wilfully
by the wyndowes of thy body / and hast nat defended thy self suffi
saantly agayns hire assautes / and hire temptacions / so that they han
wounded thy soule in .v. places / this is to seyn the deedly synnes
that been entred in to thyn herte / by thy .v. wittes ¶ And in the same
maneres / oure lord crist / hath wold and suffred / that thy .iij. enemys
been entred in to thyn hous by the wyndowes / and han ywounded
thy doghter / in the forseyde maneres ¶ Ireles quod melibee ¶ I wol
that ye enforce your wittes by wordes to do me counseil / in swich maner
that I shal nat renge me of myne enemys ne chastyse me therafter /
the ryghte / that myghten falle of this vengeance / but I wol
be conseyle in alle vengeances the ryghte and ryeles pt̄ myghte se
me of vengeance takynge / a man sholde nedes take vengeance / and
that ful soone / for by the vengeance takynge / been the wikked
men dissevered fro the goode men ¶ And they that han wyl to do wik
kednesse / restreyne hire wikked purpos / whan they seen the punysshynge
and chastysynge of the trespassour ¶ And yet seye I moore / that
ryght as a singuler persone / synneth in takynge vengeance of a
nother man / right so / synneth the juge / if he do no vengeance of
hem / that it han disserved / ffor certein / seith thus ¶ That maistres
he seith is good / that proveth shrewes ¶ And as catoun seith /
¶ A man oghte to do outrages / whan he doot / and knoweth / that it
displeseth to the juges / and soothly ¶ Another seith ¶ the juge pt̄
oghte to do ryght / maketh men shrewes ¶ And seint paule the
apostle / seith in his epistle / whan he writeth vn to the romayns /
that the juges been nat the dreed / with outen cause / but they been
it to punysse the shrewes and myssoeres / and to defende the goode
men ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemys / ye shul
retourne / or have youre recours to the juge that hath the jurisdiccion
on hem / and he shal punysse hem / as the lawe axeth and
requireth ¶ I quod melibee / this vengeance liketh me no thyng /
¶ bithenke me now and take heede how ffortune hath norissed
me fro my childhede / and hath holpen me / to passe many a
thyng / pas ¶ Now wol I assayen hire / mokkynge with goddes
help / that she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge ¶ I quod dame
prudence ¶ If ye wol werke by my conseil / ye shul nat /
assaye ffortune by no way / ne ye shul nat lene or bowe vn
to hire after the wordes of ysope ¶ ffor thynges that been folily
doon / and that been in hope of ffortune / shullen neiie come to good
ende ¶ And as the same ysope seith / the moore cleer and the moo
re shynynge / that ffortune is / the moore hydous / and the soonner ho
ven she is / thrusteth nat in hire / for she nys nat stedefast / ne stable
for whan thou trowest / to be moost seur / and ast of hire help /
she wol faille thee / and betrayne thee ¶ And wheye as ye seyn
that ffortune hath norissed yow fro youre childhede / I seye / that

¶ Melibee

¶ Prudence

¶ Ysope

¶ Seneca

¶ Catoun

¶ Seneca

¶ Paulus apostle ad Romanos

¶ Melibee

¶ Prudence

¶ Seneca

¶ Melibee

in so muchel and ye the lasse myste in hyr estat. for seneca
seith that man that is norysed by fortune ys maketh hym a greet Seneca
fool ¶ Now thanne syn ye desyre and axe vengeance and the vengeance that is doon after the lawe and bifore the juge me liketh yow natt and the vengeance that is doon in hope of fortune is prious and vnleful thanne shal ye noon oothey remedie but for to save youre persons vn to the soverayn juge that vengeth alle vilenyes and wronges. and he shal venge yow after that hym self axitnesseth where as he seith. he wol the vengeance to me and I shal do it ¶ Melibee answerde. ¶ If Melibee
I me venge no matt of the vilenye that men han doon to me. I. somtyme or thyne men that han doon to me that vilenye & alle otheye to do me another vilenye ¶ for it is writen ¶ If thou take no vengeance of an oold vilenye thou conpleynest thyne adversayres to do thee a newe vilenye ¶ And also for my sufferance men sholden do to me so muchel vilenye that I myghte neithey bere it ne sustene and so sholde I been pit and holden on lowe ¶ for men seyn in muchel sufferynge shul manye thynges falle vn to thee. & chiche thou shalt nat moche suffise. ¶ Catones ryhte Patience
graunte yow that oon muchel sufferance nys nat good but yet ne forsweth it nat they of that vileyn ryse to shewe men doon vilenye take of it vengeance for that apeneth and longeth al oonly to the juges for they shul venge the vilenyes and iniuryes. And therfore tho two auctorites that ye han seyd above been oonly vnderstonden in the juges for whan they suffren oon muchel the wronges and the vilenyes to be doon with outen punysshynge they conforme nat a man al oonly for to do newe wronges but they commanden it. ¶ Also a wys man seith that the juge that tormenteth nat the synne commandeth and bideth hym do synne ¶ And the juges and iudeyns myghten in hir lond so muchel suffre of the shrewes and myssedoers that they sholden by swich sufferance by processe of tyme engreen of swich power and myghte that they sholden putte out the juges and the iudeyns from hir places and atte laste maken hem lese hir lordshipes ¶ But lat vs nowe putte that ye hane leve to venge yow and seye ye been nat of myghte and power as nowe to venge yow for if ye sholde maken taryson vn to the myghte of youre adversaires ye shul fynde in manye thynges that I have shewed yow er this that hir condicion is bettre than youres ¶ And therfore seye I that it is good as nowe that ye suffre and be patient. ¶ ffor they moore ye knowen wel that after the wise man it is a goodnesse a man to chyde with a strenger or a moore myghty man than he is hym self. and for to chyde with a man of evene strengthe that is to seyn with as strong a man as he. it is pil. and for to fighte with a feyble man it is folie ¶ And therfore sholde a man flee chydynge as muchel as he myghte. ¶ ffor Salomon seith it is a greet worshipe to a Salomon
man to kepen hym fro noyse and chyde. ¶ And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of grettey myghte and strengthe than thou art. do thee grevance studie and busye thee paiseby to stille tho-

¶ Chaucer

¶ Seneca

¶ Cato

¶ Poeta

¶ Gregorius

¶ Petrus in epistola

¶ Apostolus i epistola

¶ Salomon

¶ Jacobus in epistola

¶ Aristobee

sanus grenance / than for to venge thee / ffor Seneca seith / that he put
teth hym vñ greet vnl / that ouercometh with a gretter man / than he is
hym self ¶ And Caton seith / If a man of hyer estaat or degree / or moo
re myghty than thou do thee anoy or grenance / suffre hym / for he that
anes hath greued thee / another tyme may yelden thee and helpe vs
yet ouer-al cas / ye shal haue both myght and licence / for to venge yow / ¶
Ne yo that they be ful many yo thynges / that shul refreyne yow / of /
vengeance take ynge / and make yow / for to suffre hym / to suffre / and for
to han patience / in the thynges / that han been doon to yow ¶ ffirst /
and forewarde / if ye shold considere the defautes / that been in youre
owene persone / for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow have this
tribulacion / as I have seyd yow heer-biforn ¶ ffor the poete seith
that he ought patiently taken the tribulacions that comen to vs
whan he thynken and considereth / that he han disserued to have
hem ¶ And seint Gregorie seith / that whan a man considereth
wel the nombre of his defautes / and of his synnes / the peynes
and the tribulacions that he suffreth / comen the lesse vn to hym
and in as muche / as hym thynketh / his synnes moore heuy and
grenous / in so muche / encreseth his peyne the lighter / an the es
yer vn to hym ¶ Also / ye owen for to enclyne and bowe youre
herte / to take the patience of oure lord Ihu crist / as seith seint /
Peter in his epistles ¶ Ihu crist he seith / hath suffred for vs /
yeuen ensample to euery man / to folwe and werke hym / for he vide
neither synne / ne neuer was ther guyle out of his mouth /
whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem noght / and whan men betten
hym / he manaced hem noght ¶ Also / the grete patience / which the
seintes that been in paradys / han had in tribulacions that they
han ysuffred with outen hir desert / or gilt / oghte muchel stiren
yow to patience ¶ ffor they moore / ye sholde enforce yow / to have
patience / considerynge / that the tribulacions of this world / but /
litel while endure / and soone passen been and goone ¶ And the ioye
that a man / seketh to have by patience in tribulacions / is ym /
mortable / after that the apostle seith in his epistle ¶ The ioye of god /
he seith is ymmortable / that is to seyn eternally ynge ¶ Also the wey /
and biddeth stedefastly / that he nys nat wel ynorissed ne wel y /
taught / that han nat have patience / or wol nat receyue patience /
ffor Salomon seith ¶ That the doctryne and the wit of a man / is know
en by patience ¶ And in another place he seith ¶ that he that is pa
cient / gouerneth hym by greet prudence ¶ And the same Salomon seith
The angry and wrathful man / maketh noyses / and the patient man
atempreth hem and stilleth ¶ He seith also / It is moore worth to be
patient / than for to be right strong / And he that may have the lord
shipe of his owene herte / is moore to preyse / than he that by his for
ce or strengthe taketh grete Cites ¶ Wherfore seith seint Jame
in his epistle ¶ That patience is a greet vertu of perfection ¶ Textes
quos melibee ¶ graunte yow have prudence / that patience is a
greet vertu of perfection / but euery man may nat have the perfection pt
ye owen / ne I nam nat of the nombre / of right perfite men / for myn

hem/ may nedde been in pees/ or to the tyme it be vengid/ and al be it so
that it was gret pil to myne enemys/ to do me a vilenye/ in takyng ven-
geance vpon me/ yet toke they noon hede of the pil/ but fulfilleden/ hir
wikked wyl and hir corage/ And therfore me thynketh/ men oghten nat be
preue me/ though I putte me in a litel pil for to venge me/ and though I
do a gret excesse/ that is to seyn/ that I venge oon outrage by another
Aquod Dame Prudence/ ye seyn youre wyl and as yow liketh/ but
in no cas of the world/ a man sholde nat doon outrage ne excesse for to
vengen hym/ ffor Catoun seith/ that as yuele doth he that vengeth
hym by outrage as he that doth the outrage/ And therfore/ ye shul venge
yow/ after the ordre of right/ that is to seyn by the lawe and noght by
excesse ne by outrage/ And also/ If ye wol venge yow of the outrage of
youre adversaries in oother manere than right techeth/ ye synnen
And therfore seith Senec/ that a man shal nedes vengen shrewednesse
by shrewednesse/ And if ye seye that right axeth a man to defenden
violence by violence/ and fightyng by fightyng/ certes ye seye soth
whan the defense is doon anon with outen entervalle or with outen
tarying or delay for to deffenden hym/ and nat for to vengen hym
And it bisemeth that a man putte swich attemperance in his deffense
that men shal no cause ne matiere/ to repreuen hym that deffendeth
hym of excesse and outrage/ for elles were it agayn resoun/ Wherfore ye
knowen wel/ that ye maken no deffense as now/ for to deffende yow
but for to venge yow/ And so sheweth it/ that ye shal no wyl to do youre
dede attemprely/ And therfore/ me thynketh that patience is good/ ffor
Salomon seith/ That he that is nat patient/ shal have gret harm
Certes quod Melibee/ I graunte yow that whan a man is impa-
cient/ and stoppeth of that/ pt toucheth hym noght/ and that apperteneth
nat vn to hym/ though it harme hym/ it is no folye/ ffor the lawe
seith/ that he is culpable that destourbleth or medleth with swych
thyng/ as apperteneth nat vn to hym/ And Salomon seith/ That he
that destourbleth hym of the noyse or stryf of another man/ is lyk
to hym/ that taketh an hound by the eres/ ffor right as he that taketh
a straunge hound by the eres/ is outrageously bitten with the hound
right in the same wise is it resoun/ that he that hath harm/ that by his in
patience medleth hym/ of the noyse of another man/ ellesse as it ap
perteneth nat vn to hym/ But ye knowen wel/ that this word/ that
is to seyn/ myn grief and myn disese toucheth me right nyh/ And there-
fore/ though I be sooth and patient/ it is no merveille/ and re
medge youre grace/ I kan nat deem/ that it myghte greetly harme
me/ though I took vengeance/ for I am riche/ and more myghty
than myne enemys been/ and wel knowen ye/ that by moneye and
by havynge grete possessions/ been alle thynges of this world ob-
eyen/ And Salomon seith/ That alle thynges/ obeyen to moneye
Whan Prudence/ hadde herd hir housbonde answeren hym of his
richesse and of his moneye/ destressynge the power of his adversa-
ries she spak and seyde in this wise/ Certes/ dere sire/ I graunte yow
that ye been riche and myghty/ and that the richesses been goode to
hem pt han hem wel ygeten/ and wel konne vsen hem/ ffor

¶ Damphilles

¶ Cassiodrus

¶ Petrus Alfonce

¶ Innocencius

¶ Salomon

¶ Salomon

¶ Tullius

ȝght as the body of a man may natt lyuen with oute the soule
Namoore may it lyue with outen temporeel goodes And for-
ses may a man gete hym gret frendes ¶ And therfore seith Da-
philles ¶ If anetheydes doghter seith so be that she may chesen
of a thousand men for of a thousand men oon wol natt forsaken
hyr ne refusen hyr ¶ And this Damphilles seith also ¶ If thow
be ȝght happy that is to seyn if thou be ȝght riche thou shalt fyn
de a gret nombre of felawes and frendes ¶ And if thy fforȝune chan
ge that thou canst poure felawshipe and felawesshipe for
thou shalt be al allone ⁊t outen any companyne but if it be the
companyne of poure folk ¶ And yet seith this Damphilles more
ouer ¶ that they that been thralle and bonde of lynage shulden been
mand worthy and noble by the richesses ¶ And ȝght so as by riches
ses they conuen manye goodes ȝght so by pouste conuen they manye
frendes and yueles ¶ for gret pouste constreyneth a man to do ma
nye yueles ¶ And therfore seith Cassidore pouste the moodes of
tirannye that is to seyn the moodes of outrageous ȝyngе or fallyng
doun ¶ And therfore seith Tullius alfonce ¶ Don of the gretteste adiui
tees of this worldly is whan a free man by lynde or by burthe is co
streyned by pouste to eten the almesse of his enemy ¶ And thus seith
seith Innocent ¶ moon of hise bookes ¶ he seith that sorweful and
myschaunt is the condicion of a poure begger for if he axe natt he
mete he dyeth for hunger ¶ And if he axe he dyeth for shame and
algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe ¶ And therfore seith
Salomon ¶ that bet it is to dye than for to liue swich pouste
¶ And as the olde Salomon seith ¶ bettre it is to dye of bitter deeth
than for to lyuen in swich wise ¶ By thise resons that I haue seid
Un to yow and by many otheре resons that I koude seye I gesse
yow that richesses been goode to hem that geten hem wel and to
hem that wel usen the richesses ¶ And therfore wol I seche yow lor
ye shul haue yow and how ye shul kepe yow in gadelynge of ri
chesses and in what maneres ye shul usen hem ¶ ffirst ye shul
geten hem with outen gret desir by good leyser ekyngly and nat
ouer hastily for a man that is to desirynge to gete richesses abaun
doneth hym first to thefte and to alle otheре yueles ¶ And therfore
seith Salomon ¶ he that hasteth hym to bisily to be riche shal be
noon innocent ¶ he seith also that the richesse that hastily cometh
to a man soone and lightly gooth and passeth fro a man ¶ but that
richesse that cometh litel and litel weyeth alwey and multiplieth
¶ Thus sire ye shul geten richesses by youre wit and by youre trauaille
Un to youre profit And that with outen grouge or stryf to-
ward ony otheре persone ¶ For the lacke seith that they maketh no vnthri
uen riche if he do hym to another knight This is to seyn that
nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hym
self riche un to the harm of another persone ¶ And Tullius seith that
no werre no no dreed of deeth ne no thyng that may falle un to
A man is so muchel agayns nature As a man to encresse his
owene profit to the harm of another man ¶ And though the grete men

and the myghtyy men geten richesses more lightly than thou / yet
shalton natt been ydel ne clokk to do thyy profit / for thou shalt in alle
Ese flee ydelnesse ¶ ffor Salomon seith / that ydelnesse techeth a
man to do manye yueles ¶ And the same Salomon seith / that he
that travailleth and bisieth hym to tilien his lande shal eten breed
but he that is ydel / and casteth hym to no bisynesse no occupacion
shal falle in to pouste / and dye for hunger ¶ And he that is ydel &
clokk / kan ueue fynde conenable tyme for to doon his profit / ffor they
is a districioun / seith / that the ydel man exciteth hym in corages / by cau
se of the grete rookel / and in oold / by encheson of the heete / ffor thise
causes / Caton / taketh and enchyneth natt yoke old manchel / for to cle
pe / for old manchel / sekke norisseth and causeth manye vices / And they
fore / seith Seint Jerome / Dooth olde goodes / that the deuel fyndeth no
thyng enemyy ne fynde yoke natt occupied / ffor the deuel no taketh
natt lightly in to his herkynge whiche as he fyndeth occupied in goo
de werkes ¶ Thanne thus / in getynge richesses / ye moten flee ydel
nesse / And afterward ye shul vse the richesses / whiche ye haue geten
by youre witt / and by youre travaille / in swich a maneye / that men
holde natt yoke to scars ne to scrapynge ne to fool large / that is to
seyn / ouer large & spendeye / for right as men blamen an auaryti
ous man / by cause / of his scarsetee and chyngerie / in the same wi
se is he to blame that spendeth ouer largely / And therfore seith
Caton / Use / he seith / thy richesses that thou hast geten in swich
a maneye / that men haue no matheye ne cause / to calle thee nayty
werche ne thynthe / for it is a greet shame to a man to haue a pore
herte and a riche purs ¶ He seith also / the goodes that thou hast yge
ten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn / spende hem mesurably / for
they that folily / waste and despenden the goodes that they han /
whan they han namoore ayre of hir owene / they shapen hem to
take the goodes of another man ¶ Se / seye thanne / that ye shul-
leen auaryce / chyngе youre richesses / in swich maneye / that men
seye natt / that youre richesses been yburyed / but that they haue hem in
youre mygh / and in youre kepynge ¶ ffor a wys man / despiseth
the auarycious man / and seith thus / in this wyse ¶ Why / to what
hunteth a man his goodes by his grete auaryce / and knoweth wel
that nedes moste he dye / for deeth is the ende of euery man / as in this
present lyf ¶ And for what cause or encheson / coueyteth he hym / or
enforceth he hym so faste / in to his goodes / that alle his
wittes mowen natt sufficen hym / or departen hym from his
goodes / and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / that whan he is
dede / he shal no thyng bere with hym out of this world ¶ And
therfore seith Seint Augustyn / That the auarycious man is lik
nes / in to helle / that the more it receiveth / the more desyr
it hath to receyue / and deuoureth / and as wel as ye sholde esche
we / to be called an auarycious man / or chynche / as wel sholde
ye kepe yoke / and gouerne yoke / in swich a wyse / that men calle
yoke natt / fool large ¶ Therfore seith Tullius / The goodes he
seith / of thyn hous / ne sholde natt been hyd / ne kept so thos

Salomon ...

Unde Isidorus ...

Cato ...

Item Jerome ...

Cato ...

Unde Isidorus ...

Augustinus ...

Tullius ...

¶ Chaucer ~

but that they mygte to been opened by prise and debonayetee ¶ That is to seyn to yeuen yaft to shen that shan gyect nede / ne thy goodes shullen nat been so opene to been euery manues goodes ¶ Af terward in getynge of youre pitesses and in dispynge shen ye shul alkey shaue thre thynges in youre heyte / that is to seyn / Oure lord god / Conscience and good name ¶ ffirst ye shul shaue god in youre heyte and for no pitesse ye shullen do no thynge / Which may in any maneres displese god that is youre creatour and makere ¶ ffor after the lore of Salomon ¶ It is betre to shaue a litel good with the loue of god than to shaue muchel good and tresour and lese the loue of his lord god ¶ And the wyse seith / Bette it is to been a good man and shaue litel good and tresour than to been holden a shrewe and shaue grete pitesses ¶ And yet seye I ferthermoore that ye sholde alkey doon youre bisynesse to gete youre pitesses so that ye gete hem ek good conscience ¶ And thapostle seith / that they nys thyng in this lyf / of Which ye sholden shame so greet ioye as whan oure conscience beyeth ye good witnesse ¶ And the wise man seith / The substance of a man is ful good / whan synne is nat in mannes conscience ¶ Afterward in getynge of youre pitesses and in dispynge of hem / yow moste shaue greet bisynesse and greet diligence that youre goode name be alkey kept and conserued / ffor Salomon seith / that bette it is and moore it auailleth a man to shaue a good name than for to shaue grete pitesses ~ and therfore he seith in another place / Do greet diligence seith Salo mon in keepynge of thy freend and of thy goode name for it shal lon ger abide with thee than any tresour / do it neuer so precious ¶ And ek he sholde nat be called a gentil man that after god and good conscien ce alle thynges left / ne doth his diligence and bisynesse to kepen his good name ¶ And Cassidore seith ¶ that it is signe of gentil herte whan a man loueth and desireth to han a good name ¶ And therfore seith seint Augustyn ¶ that they been two thynges that aren ne cessarie and nedefulle and that is good conscience and good loos / that is to seyn / good conscience to thyn owene persone inward / and good loos for thy neyghebore outward / And he that trusteth hym to muchel in his goode conscience that he displeseth and setteth at nought his goode name or loos / and recketh nought though he kepe nat his goode na me / nys but a proud fool / ¶ Sone wolt thou han I shewed yow how ye shul do in getynge pitesses and how ye shullen vsen hem / and I se wel that for the trust that ye han in youre pitesses / ye wole moeue werre and batailles ¶ I conseille yow that ye bigynne no werre in trust of youre pitesses for they ne suffisen nought werres to mayntene ¶ And therfore seith a philosophre ¶ that man that desireth and wole algates han werre / shal neede han suffisaunce for the richesse that he is / the grettest despenses moste he make / if he wole han worshipe and victorie ¶ And Salomon seith / That the grettest pitesses that a man hath / the moo despendours he hath ¶ And certes / al be it so / that for youre pitesses / ye moste han muchel folk yet bisyeth it nat / ne it is nat good to bigynne werre / there as ye moste in eyther maneye / han pees vnto youre worshipe and

¶ Salomon ~

¶ Tullius ~

¶ Tullius ~

¶ Sapiens ~

¶ Salomon ~

¶ Cassidorus ~

¶ Augustyn ~

¶ Thous

¶ Salomon ~

¶ Melibee

profit ¶ ffor the victories of batailles that ben in this world lyen nat
in grete noumbre or multitude of the people ne in the strength of man but
it lith in the ryf and in the hand of our lord god almyghty ¶ And
therfore Judas machabeus writh was goddes knyght. Than he-
sholde fighte agayn his adversaries that hadde a grete noumbre and
a grettey multitude of folk and strenger than was this people of
machabee. yet he recomforted his litel companye and dryve myght
in this wise ¶ Als lightly quod he may our lord god almyghty ye-
ve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk. for the victorie of a batai-
le couth nat by the grete noumbre of people but it come from our
lord god of heven ¶ And dreed ye nat for as muchel as they is no man
eteen if he be worthy that god yeve hym victorie or naught. after
that Salomon seith therfore every man sholde gretly drede dey-
res to bigynne ¶ And by cause that in batailles fallen many pe-
ple and happeth outhey while that as soone is the grete man slayn
as the litel man. and as it is writen in the seconde book of kynges
the dedes of batailles been aventurous and no thyng certeyne for
as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another. and for they is gret
pil in werre therfore sholde a man flee and eschue werre in as mu-
chel as a man may goodly. ffor Salomon seith. he that loveth pil
shal falle in pil ¶ After that dame Prudence hadde spoken in
this maneye melibee answerde and seyde ¶ dee wel dame prudence
that by youre fayr wordes and by youre resons that ye han shew
wed me that the werre liketh yow no thyng. but I have nat yet
herd youre conseil how I shal do in this nede ¶ certes quod she
I conseille yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries and that ye
have pees with hem ¶ ffor seint Jame seith in his epistles that
by contrek and pees the cruele nacciones weyen grete and by debaat
and discord the grete nacciones fallen down ¶ And ye knowen wel
that oon of the grettestes and mooste soverayn thyng that is in this
world is vitee and pees ¶ And therfore seyde our lord crist
to his apostles in this wise ¶ wel happy and blessed been they that
loven and purchasen pees for they been called children of god
quod melibee. now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour me my
worshipe ¶ ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen
this debaat and wronge by hir outrage and ye se wel that they ne
requeren ne preyen me nat of pees ne they asken nat to be recon
siled ¶ wol ye than that I go and meke me and obeye me to
hem and crie hem mercy. ffor sothe that seye nat my worship
ffor right as men seyn that over greet hoomlynesse engendreth dis
preysynge. so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse ¶ than
ne bigan dame prudence to maken semblant of wratthe and
seyde ¶ certes nay cauf youre grace I love youre honour and
youre profit as I do myn owene and elles have doon me ye me noon
oothey seyen nedes the contrayre ¶ And yit if I hadde seyd that ye
sholde han purchased the pees and the reconsiliacion I ne hadde
nat unwisely mystaken me ne seyd amys. ffor the wise man sayth
the dissencion bigynneth by another man and the reconsiliyng by

¶ Salomon ¶ In ij. li. Regu ¶ Salomon ¶ Prudence ¶ Melibee ¶ Prudence ¶ Jacobus in epist ¶ Dns aplis suis ¶ Melibee ¶ Prudence ¶ Sapiens

Tyelibee

Tappia

Tyelibee

Tappia

Tyelibee

Tpyndence

Tyelibee

Tpyndence

Tyelibee

Tpyndence

mes and ꝑils / that been in ẽre / and seyde to hem / in a goodly ma
nere / how that hem oughten have gret repentaunce / of the iniurie &
wrong / that they hadden doon to melibee his lord / and to hys / and to
hys doghtes / And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of dame
ꝑudence / they weren so ꝑfytted and ravyssed / and hadden so
gret ioye of hys / that wonder was to telle A lady quod they / ye
han shewed vs to vs / the blessynge of swetnesse / after the sawe of
David the ꝓphete / for the reconsilynge / whych we been nat worthy
to have in no maneres / but / we oghte requeren it / with gret contri
cion and humylitee / ye of youre grete goodnesse have ꝑformed vn
to vs now as ye wel / that the science and the konnynge of Salo
mon is ful therfor he seith / that swete wordes / multiplien
and encreesten frendes / and maken shrewes / to be debonaire and
meeke A repentes quod they / we purpose oure dede and al oure matere
and cause / al hoolly in youre goode wyl / and been redy to obeye to
the heeste and comandement / of my lord melibee And they forth
dreye and benygne lady / we preyen yow and biseke yow as meekely
as we konne and moost / that it lyke vn to youre grete good
nesse to fulfillen in dede / youre goodliche wordes / for we consider
yen and knowlechen / that we han offended and greved my lord
melibee out of measure / so ferforth / that we be nat of power / to
maken hys amendes / and therfore / we obligge and bynden vs
and oure freendes / to doon al his wyl and his comandements
But ꝑauenture / he hath swich hevynesse and swich wratthe
to vs warde / by cause of oure offense / that he wole enoyne vs
swich a peyne as we mowe nat bere ne sustene / and therfor
fore noble lady / we biseke / to youre womanly pitee / to take
swich amendement / in this nede / that we nor oure freendes / be
nat destreyned ne destroyed thurgh oure folye Certes quod
ꝑudence / it is an hard thyng / and right perilous / that a man
putte his lyf in al outrely / in the arbitracion and jugement / and
in the myght / and power of his enemys ffor salomon seith
Ne comeneth me and yeveth credence / to that I shal seyn / seye ye the
Salomon
thre peple / folk and gouvernours of hoolly chirche / to thy wyf / to thy
child / to thy freend / ne to thy brother / ne yeve thou never
myght ne maistrie of thy body / whil thou lyvest / for
then he defendeth / that man shal nat yeven to his brother
ne to his freend / the myght of his body / by strenger reson he
defendeth and forbedeth a man / to yeven hym self to his ene
my And nathelees I conseille you / that ye / myght nat
my lord / for I woot wel / and knowe dreadly / that he is debo
naire and meeke / large / curteys / and no thyng desyrous ne
coveitous of good ne richesse ffor they nys no thyng in this
world / that he desyreth / save oonly / worshyp and honour ffor
they moore / I knowe wel / and am myght seur / that he shal no
thyng / doon in this nede / with outen my conseil / and I shal
so werken in this cause / that / by grace of oure lord god / yo
shul been reconsiled vn to vs Whanne seyden they / with o-

Prudence

Salomon

Chaucer

Prudence

Melibee

Seneca

Prudence

Prudence

leye/ dereworthful lady dee putten de and oure goodes al fully in youre wil and disposicion/ and been redy to conuen what day pt it like yu to yeue me leese to hyuyte de ꝙ assigne de for to maken oure obligacion and boond as strong as it liketh yu to youre goodnesse/ that de worke fulfille the wille of yow/ and of my lord melibee Whan dame prudence hadde herd the answeres of thise men/ she was wel goon again/ wisely/ and she retourned to hir lord melibee/ and tolde hym how she foond hise adversaries ful repentant/ knoweleching ful lowely hir synnes and trespas/ and how they were redy to suffren alle peyne requyringe & preyinge hym of mercy and pitee Thanne seyde melibee/ Me is wel worthy to have yeue and forgyfnesse of his synne pt axeth/ nat his synne but knoweleccheth it & repenteth hym/ axinge indulgence & for dere dertu they is the remission and forgyfnesse/ there as confession is/ for confession is neighebore to innocence and therfore I assente and conforme me to have pees/ but it is good pt we do it nat/ but outen the assent & wyl of oure freendes Thanne was prudence right glad and joyful/ and seyde/ certes quod she ye han wel & goodly answered/ for right as by the conseil/ assent and help of youre freendes ye han been stired to venge yow & maken werre/ right so with outen hir conseil shul ye nat accorden yow/ ne have pees with youre adversaries/ for the cause dertu they nys no thyng so good by dey of kynde/ as a thyng to been unbounde by hym pt it was ybounde/ And thanne dame prudence with outen delay or taryinge sente anon hir messages for hir kyn & for hir olde freendes/ whiche pt were wyse and olde and tolde hem by order in the presence of melibee al this matere/ as it is above ywritte/ & declared/ and preyden pt they wolde yeuen hir avys & conseil/ what best were to doon in this nede And whan melibees freendes hadde taken hir avys & deliberacion of the forseide matere & hadden examyned it by grete bisynesse & grete diligence they yaue ful conseil for to have pees and reste/ and pt melibee sholde receyue ꝙt good wille hise adversaires to forgyfnesse and mercy And whan dame prudence hadde herd the assent of hir lord melibee/ and the conseil of hise freendes accorde ꝙt hir wille and hir entencion/ she was wonderly glad in hir herte and seyde/ dertes my dere sustre quod she/ dertu the goodnesse pt thou mayst do this day/ do it/ and abide nat/ ne delaye it nat/ til to morwe And therfore I conseille pt ye sende youre messages swiche as been discrete and wise un to youre adversaires/ tellinge hem on youre byhalue/ pt if they wole trete of pees & of accord/ that they shape hem with outen delay or taryinge/ to comen un to vs/ which thyng pfouned was in dede And whanne this trespassours and repentinge folk/ of hir folies/ that is to seyn/ the adversaires of melibee/ hadden herd/ what thise messageys seyden un to hem/ they were right glad & joyful/ and answereden ful meekely & benignely yeldinge graces & thankinges to hir lord melibee & to al his compaignye/ & shopen hem ꝙt outen delay to go ꝙt the messageys & obeye to the comaundement/ of hir lord melibee And right anon they tooken hir keys to the court of melibee/ and tooken ꝙt hem/ some of hir owne freendes/ to maken feith for hem & for to been hir borges/ and whan they were co

Tyelibee ...

men to the ꝑsence of tyelibee / he seyde hem thise wordes / that standeth thus
quod tyelibee and sooth it is / that ye causeles and ꝯ outen cause & reson
han doon grete iniuries & wronges to me and to myn wyf ꝑ-mdence
and to myn doghter also / for ye han entred in to myn hous by violence
and han doon swich outrage ꝑt alle men knowen wel ꝑt ye han
disseised the seeth / and therfore wol I knowe and wite of yow / wheither
they ye wol putte the punyssement & the chastisynge & the vengeance of this outrage / in the wyl of me / and of myn wyf ꝑ-mdence / or
ye wol nat / Whanne tyelibee took hem vp fro the ground ful benignely & receyved hyr obligacions & hir boondes by hyr othes vp on
hyr pledges & borwes / and assigned hem a certayn day to retourne
ayn to his court / for to accepte & receyve the sentence & Iuggement
ꝑt tyelibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes afore-
seyd / whiche thynges ordeyned / every man retorned to his hous / and
whan ꝑt dame ꝑ-mdence caught hir tyme / she frayned & axed hir
lord tyelibee / what vengeance he thoughte to taken of hise adversaries
Tyelibee ...
Who which tyelibee answerde & seyde / certes quod he / I thynke & ꝑ-mdence ...
purpose me fully / to desherite hem / and al ꝑt evre they han / and for
to putte hem / in exil for ever / certes quod dame ꝑ-mdence this were
a cruel sentence and unresonable ayn reson / for ye been riche ynough
and han no neede of other mennes good / and ye myghte lightly in-
this wise gete yow a coveitous name / which is a vicious thyng / & Aristotle
oghte been eschues of every good man / for after the sawe of the
wyse of the apostle / coveitise is roote of alle harmes / and therfore
it were litel bettre for yow to lese so muchel good of youre owene than-
for to taken of hir good in this maneye / for bettre it is to lesen with
worshipe / than it is to venquisshe ayn vileynye & shame / and every man
oghte to doon his diligence & his bisynesse / to geten hym a good na
me / and yet shal he nat only bisie hym in kepynge of his good na
me / but he shal also enforcen hym alwey / to do som thyng / by which he
may renovelle his good name / for it is writen ꝑt the olde good leves &
good name of a man / is some goon and passed / than it is nat ne-
ded ne renovelled / And as touchynge ꝑt ye seyn / ye wole exile
youre adversaires / that thynketh me muchel ayn reson and out of

¶ Tyelibee ~

mesnye / consideyes the power-ꝑ they han yeue yowe upon hem self. And it is writen ꝑ he is worthy to lesen his purlege ꝑ myssuseth the myght & ꝑ the power-ꝑ is yeuen hym. And sette cas / ye myghte enioyne hem ꝑ peyne by right & by lawe / which / ye nowe nat do / / seye ye nught to nat purtten it to execucion perauenture / and thanne were it likly to be tornne to the werre as it was biforn / And therfore / if ye wole ꝑ men do yowe obeisance / ye moste demen more curteisly / this is to seyn / ye moste yeuen more esy sentences & iuggementz. ¶ For it is writen / ꝑ he ꝑ moost curteisly comandeth / to hym men moost obeyen / and therfore / preye yowe ꝑ in this necessitee & in this nede / ye caste yowe to outrome youre herte. ¶ For seneca / seith / That he ꝑ ouercometh his herte / ouercomep tries. ¶ And Tullius seith / ¶ ther is no thyng so comendable in a greet lord / as whan he is debonaire & meeke / and appeseth lightly / and / preye yowe ꝑ ye wole forbere now to do vengeaunce in swich a matere / ꝑ youre goode name may be kept & conserued / and ꝑ men nowe han cause and matere / to preyse yowe of pitee & of mercy / and ꝑ ye han no cause to repente yowe of thyng ꝑ ye doon. ¶ For seneca / he ouercometh in an yuel manere ꝑ repenteth hym of his victorie / wherfore / preye yowe / that ye been in youre myndes & in youre herte to theffect & entente ꝑ god almyghty have mercy on yowe in his laste iuggement. ¶ For seint Jame seith in his epistle / ¶ Iuggement shal be doon to hym / ꝑ hath no mercy of another wight. ¶ Whanne Tyelibee hadde herd the grete skiles and resons of Dame Prudence / and hir wise informacions & techynges / his herte gan enclyne to the wil of his wif considerynge hir trewe entente / and conformed hym anon and assentes fully to ben reuled after hir conseil / and thonked god / of whom procedeth al vertu and alle goodnesse / ꝑ hym sente a wif / of so greet discrecion And whan the day cam ꝑ hise aduersaires sholde appiereu in his presence / he spak vn to hem ful goodly / and seyde in this wyse. ¶ Al be it so / ꝑ of youre pryde and presumpcion & folie / and of youre necligence & vnkonnynge / ye have myssayd yowe and trespassed vn to me. yet for as muche / as / see and biholde youre greete humylitee / and ꝑ ye been sory and repentaunt of youre giltes / it constreyneth me to doon yowe grace and mercy. ¶ Therefore / receyue yowe to my grace and forgeue yowe outrely alle thise offenses / iniuries and outrages ꝑ ye han doon agayn me and myne / to this effect / and to this ende / that god of his endelees mercy wole at the tyme of oure dyynge forgeuen vs oure giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wrecched world. ¶ For doutelees / if we be sory and repentaunt of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of oure lord god / he is so free and so mercyable / that he wole forgeuen vs oure giltes and bryngen vs to his blisse that neuer hath ende. Amen ~ ~ ~

¶ Heere is endede Chaucers tale of Tyelibee and of Dame Prudence ~

¶ Seneca ~
¶ Tullius

¶ Seneca ~

¶ Jacobz in epistola ~

¶ Tyelibee ~

The myrie wordes of the hoost to the tyoun

Whan ended was my tale of melibee
And of Prudence and hir benignitee
Our hoost seyde as a faithful man
And bi that precious corpus madrian
I hadde knowe than a bowe ale
That goode lief my wyf hadde heyd this tale
Ne myn no thyng of swich patience
As was this melibeus wyf prudence
By goddes bones quod I bete my knaves
She bringeth me forth the grete clobbed staves
And crieth slee the dogges everichoon
And breke hem bothe bak and every boon
And if that any neighebore of myne
Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne
Or be so hardy to hir trespace
Whan she comth she japeth in my face
And crieth false coward recche thy wyf
By corpus bones I wol have thy knyf
And thou shalt have my distaf and go spynne
Fro day to nyght right thus she wol bigynne
Allas she deth that evere I was shape
To wedden a milksop or a coward ape
That wol been overlad with every wight
Thou dorst nat stonden by thy wyves right
This is my lif but if that I wol fighte
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte
Or elles I am but lost but if that I
Be lik a wilde leon fool hardy
I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
Som neighebore and thanne go my way
For I am poures with knyf ne sperre
Al be it that I day hir nat forthy
For she is big in armes by my feith
That shal she fynde that hir mysdooth or seith
But lat us passe awey fro this mateere
Tho my lord the tyoun quod he be myn fey
For ye shul telle a tale trewely
Loo Rouchestre stant heer faste by
Ryde forth myn owene lord brek nat oure game
But by my trouthe I knowe nat youre name
Wher shal I calle yow my lord dan John
Or dan Thomas or elles dan Alon
Of what hous be ye by youre fader kyn
I have to god thou hast a ful fair skyn

It is a gentil pastime / they thilke goost /
Thou art nat lyk / a penitent / or a goost /
Upon my feith / thou art some officer
Some worthy sergeyn / or some bailey
ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom
Thou art a maister / whan thou art at hoom
Ne pompe ydoyfthey / ne no reverence
But a gobelyn / wild and wyld
And they wt al / of blakenes and of bones
A foul fazyngo pson / for the nones
I pray to god / yeve him confusion
That first thee broghte / un to religion
Thou woldest han been / a tredefowel aright /
Hadde stork / as gweet a leeue / as thou hast myght /
To pfoupne al thy lift / un engendrure
Thou haddest bigeten / ful many a creature
Alias / why weyestow / so wyd a cope
God yeue me sorwe / but and I sey a pope
Nat oonly thou / but every myghty man
Though he seye shorn / ful hye upon his pan
Sholde have a wyf / for al the world is worn
Religion / hath take up al the corn
Of tredyng / and we bosel men been shrympes
Of fieble trees / they conen wexen ympes
This maketh / that oure eyen wole assaye
Religious folk / for ye mowe bettre paye
Of venus pryvetes / than mowe we
God woot / no lusshebourgh / payen ye
But be nat wroth / my lord for pt I pleye
ful ofte un game / a sooth game bigo seye
This worthy monk / took al un patience
And seyde / I wol doon al my diligence
As fer as sowneth / un to honestee
To telle yow a tale / or two / or three
And if yow list / to herkne hyderward /
I wol seyn the lyf of seint Edward /
Or elles first / tragedies wol I telle
Of whiche / I have an hundred un my celle
Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie
As olde bookes / maken us memorie
Of hym / that stood / un gret prosperitee
And is yfallen / out of heigh degree
In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly
And they been versifies comunely
Of dy-fect / Whilom men diden exametron
In prose eek been endited many oon
And eek un metre / un many a sondry wyse
Lo / this declaryng / ought ynogh suffise

Lithouk

Nolle herkneth if ȝolle liketh for to heere
But first I ȝolle biseeke in this materee
Though I by ordre telle nat thise thinges
Be it of popes emperoures or kinges
After hir ages as men writen fynde
But tellen hem sonn biforn & sonn bihynde
As it nolle comth vn to myn remembrance
Haue me excused of myn ignorance

Explicit

Here bigynneth the wyfes tale de Bathe

Thol baptus in manere of tragedie
The harm of hem that stoode in heigh degree
And fillen so that ther nas no remedie
To bringe hem out of hir aduersitee
For certein whan pt ffortune list to flee
Ther may no man the cours of hir withholde
Lat no man trust on blynd prosperitee
Be war by thise ensamples trewe and olde

At Nabugo thogh he an Angel heete
And nat a man at hym thol I bigynne
ffor though ffortune may noon Angel beete
ffro thilke heigh degree yet fel he for his synne
Doun in to helle ther he yet is pinne
O Lucifer brightest of Angels alle
Now artow Sathanas pt mayst nat twinne
Out of miserie in which pt thou art falle

Lo Adam in the feeld of Damyssene
With goddes owene fynger wroght was he
And nat bigeten of mannes semne vnclene
And welte al paradys sauinge o tree
Hadde neuer worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam til he for his vnthryft
Was dryuen out of his heye prosperitee
To labour and to helle and to meschaunce

Lo Dampsdn which that was annunciat
Er his natiuitee
And was to god almyghty consecrat
And stood in noblesse whil he myghte see
Was neuer swich another as was hee
To speke of strengthe and therwithalle of hardynesse
But to his shame herkne how I shal thee
Thogh swich he were of strengthe he was but lyght

Thise

Thise

Adam

Dampsdn

¶ Thoute

Sampson / this noble almyghty champion
Within Gepene / gaue hise handes tweyne
he clouke / and al to-rente the leon
Tokaspe his wedding / walkynge by the weye
his false wyf / koude hym so plese and preye
Til she his counseil knewe / and she vntrewe
Vn to hise foos / his counseil gan bywreye
and hym forsook / and took another mate

Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
and alle hir tayles / he togyder bond
and sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
ffor he / on euery tayl / had knyt a brond
And they brende / alle the cornes in theire lond
And alle hir olyueres / and vynes eke
A thousand men / he slowe eek eet his hond
And hadde no wepene / but an asses cheke

Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / that he
Was wel nyh lorn / for which he gan to preye
That god wolde / on his peyne han som pitee
And sende hym drynke / or elles moste he deye
And of this asses cheke / that was dreye
Out of a wang tooth / sprang anon a welle
Of which he dronk anon / shortly to seye
Thus heelp hym god / as Iudicum can telle

By Gaay feere / at Gazan / on a nyght
Awaytynge Philistiens of that citee
The gates of the town he hath vp plyght
And on his bak / yeates hem hath he
Hym on an hill / pt men myghte hem see
O noble almyghty Sampson / lief and deere
Had thou nat told / to Dalida thy secree
In al this world / ne hadde been thy peere

This Sampson / ne de[illegible] dysek dronk ne wyn
Ne on his heed / cam rasour noon ne shoon
By precepte / of the messagier diuyn
ffor alle hise strengthes / in hise heeres were
And fully twenty winter yeer / by yeere
He hadde of Israel the gouernaunce
But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
ffor Dalida shal hym bryngen to meschaunce

Vn to his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in hise heeres / al his strengthe lay
And falsly to hise foomen / she hym solde

Aboue all thynge

Thus slepynge in his bayn vpon a day
Ose made to clippe / or ose his heres away
And made his foomen / al this craft espyen
And whan pt they / hym found in this array
They bounde hym faste / and putten out his eyen

But er his heer / were clippes or yshaue
They was no boond / pt which men myghte hi bynde
But now is he / inprison in a Caue
Where as they made hym at the Quecne gynde
O noble Sampson / strongest of manhynde
O whilom / Iuge in glorie and in richesse
Now maystow wepen / pt thyne eyen blynde
Oth thou so wele / art falle in wrecchednesse

The ende of this caytyf / was as I shal seye
His foomen made a feeste vpon a day
And made hym as a fool / biforn hem pleye
And this was in a temple of greet array
But atte laste / he made a foul affray
ffor he the pileres shook / and made hem falle
And down fil Temple and al / and they it lay
And slowe hym self / and eek his foomen alle

This is to seyn / the Princes enerichoon
And eek / thre thousand bodyes were they slayn
With fallynge / of the grete Temple of stoon
Of Sampson / now hol[y] martire seyn
Seth thay by this ensample oold and playn
That no men / telle hir counsel til hir wyues
Of swich thyng / as they / wolde han secree fayn
If pt it touche / hir lymes or hir lyues

Off Hercules the conquerour
Syngen his werkes / laude and heigh renoun
ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
He slowe / and rafte the skyn of the leoun
He of Centaures / leyde the booste adoun
He appies slowe / the tweel hyddes felle
He golden apples / reste of the Dragoun
He drowe out cerberus / the hound of helle

Hercules

He slowe the cruel tyraunt Busirus
And made his hors / to frete hym flessh and boon
He slowe / the fiers serpent Cenymus
Of acheldys hornes two / he brak oon
And he slowe Cacus / in a Caue of stoon
He slowe the geaunt Antheus the stronge

The clerk the gastly boor/ and that anon
And bar the heuene/ on his nekke longe

Was neuo light/ with that this world bigan
That clerk so manye wonstres/ as dide he
Thurgh out this wyde world his name ran
That for his strengthe/ and for his sleighe wontee
And euery stedefastnesse/ vnto ho for to see
He was so strong/ pt no man myghte him lette
At bothe the worldes endes/ with hende
In stide of bounder/ he a pilere sette

A lyoun hadde/ this noble champyon
That highte Nemea/ fiersh as wilde
And as thise clerkes/ maken mention
She hath him sent/ a sheepe fiersh and gilde
Alias this sheepe/ alias and weylaway
Enuenymed was/ so subtilly with alle
That er pt he/ has weyes it half a day
It made his fleesh/ al from his bones falle

But natheldes/ some clerkes hyr excusen
By oon pt highte Zoilus that it makes
Be as be may/ I rede hyr nought accusen
But on his bak/ this sheepe he weyes al nakes
Til pt his fleesh/ was for the venym blakes
And whan he raught/ noon other remedye
In hoote wolde/ he hath him selven takes
For pt no venym deynes him to dye

Thus stant this worthy mighty hercules
Lo/ who may truste/ on fortune any throwe
For him pt folweth/ al this worldes prees
Ey be way/ is ofte yleyd ful lowe
Ful wys is he/ that kan him selven knowe
Beth war/ for whan that fortune list to glose
Thanne wayteth she/ hyr man to ouerthrowe
Hyr with a key/ as he wolde leest suppose

The mighty trone/ the precious tresor
The glorious ceptre/ and royal magestee
That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor
With rouge/ vnethe may restreynes bee
He ladyes/ fram Jerusalem the cite
The vessel of the temple/ he pt him hadde
At Babiloyne/ was his dampnyng ree
In which his glorie/ and his delit he hadde

17b

Nabugodonosor ¶

The fayreste children / of the blood Royal
Of Israel / he leet do gelde anoon
And makes eche of hem / to been his thral
Amonges othere / Daniel was oon
That was the wiseste child of eddychon
ffor he / the dremes of the kyng expouned
Where as in Chaldeye / clerk ne was ther noon
That wiste / to what fyn / his dremes sowned

This proude kyng / leet maken a statue of gold
Sixty cubites long / and seuene in brede
The which ymage / he bothe yonge and oold
Comaunded to loute / and honoure in dede
Or in a ffourneys / ful of flambes rede
he shal be brent / that nolde noght obeye
But nedle wolde assente / to that dede
Daniel / ne his yonge felawes tweye

This kyng of kynges / proud was and elaat
he wende / p^t god that sit in magestee
Ne myghte / hym nat bireue of his estaat
And sodeynly / he loste his dignytee
And lyk a beest / hym semed for to bee
And eet hey as an oxe / and lay they oute
In reyn / with wilde beestes walked hee
Til certein tyme / was ycome aboute

And lik an egles fetheres / wex his heres
his nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
Til god relessed hym / a certein yeres
And yaf hym wit / and thanne wt many a teere
he thanked god / and ever his lyf in feere
Was he / to doon amys / or more trespace
And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere
he knew that god was / ful of myght & grace

¶ Balthasar ¶

His sone which that highte Balthasar
That heeld the regne / after his fadey day
he by his fadey / koude noght be war
ffor proud he was / of heete and of array
And eek an ydolastre / ho was ay
his lyve estaat / assayed hym in pryde
But ffortune / caste hym doun / and they he lay
And sodeynly / his regne gan devide

A feeste he made / unto his lordes alle
Upon a tyme / and bad hem blithe bee
And thanne his officeres gan he calle

Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he
Whiche that my fadey / vn his ꝑsytee
Out of the temple / of Jerusalem bynome
And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
Of hem / that oure eldres ꝺ̄t vs lafte

His wyf his lordes / and his concubynes
Ely dronken / whil hy̆ appetites laste
Out of thise noble vessels / wordy̆ wynes
And on a wal / this kyng / his eyen caste
And ouzh an hand ayulees / ꝑ ꝺ̄t foot ful faste
Afor feye of which / he quook / and sikes ofte
This hand / that Balthasay / so ofte agaste
Foot / vyane tethel ꝑsayes / and nanofte

In al that land / magicien was noon
That koude expounde / what this lettre meente
But Daniel / expowned it auoon
And seyde kyng / god to thy fadey ꝺ̄t
Glorie and honour / regne / tresory / rente
And he was proud / and no thyng god he dradde
And they for / god gret wreche up on hym ꝺ̄t
And hym bynome / the regne ꝑ he hadde

He was out cast / of mannes conuersinge
With asses / was his habitacion
And eet hey as a beest / in weet and dewe
Til that he knewe / hy̆ grace and hy̆ rescou
That god of heuene / hath dominacion
Ouer euery̆ regne / and euery̆ creature
And thanne / hadde god of hym compassion
And hym restored his regne and his figure

Eek thou that art his sone / art proud also
And knowest / alle thise thynges verrayly
And art rebel to god / and art his foo
Thou dronk eek / of his vessels boldely
Thy wyf eek / and thy wenches sykerly
Dronke of the same vessels / sondry̆ wynes
And heryest / false goddes cursedly
Therfore to thee / yschapen ful greet pyne ys

This hand was sent fro god / that on the wal
Wrote / vyane tethel ꝑsayes / tyuste me
Thy regne is doon / thou weyest nogt at al
Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be
To medes and to ꝑsyes quod he
And thilke same nyght / this kyng was slawe

Thomas

And Dauus occupieth his degree
Though he they-to hadde neithey right ne lacke

Lordynges ensample heer-by may ye take
Hoch that in lordshipe is no slikenesse
ffor shan ffortune hole a man forsake
She beyeth awey his regne and his richesse
And eek his freendes bothe more and lesse
ffor shat man pt hath freendes thurgh fortune
Mishap hol maken hem enemys as I gesse
This proube is ful sooth and ful commune

Cenobia of palymyene Queene
As autem psens of hir noblesse
So worthy was in armes and so keene
That no wight passed hir in hardynesse
Ne in lynage nor in oothey gentillesse
Of kynges blood of perce is she descended
I seye nat that she hadde moost fayrnesse
But of hir shape she myghte nat been amended

Cenobia

ffrom hir childhede I fynde that she fledde
Office of women and to hunte she wente
And many a wilde beestes blood she shedde
With arwes brode that she to hem sente
She was so swift pt she anon hem hente
And shan pt tho was elder she wolde hille
Leons leopardes and beres al to rente
And whan hir armes wexede hem at hir wille

She dorste wilde beestes dennes seke
And rennen in the mountaignes al the nyght
And slepen under the bussh and she koude eke
Withstonden by hir force and verray myght
With any yong man wrest he neuer so right
Ther myghte no thyng in hir armes stonde
She kepte hir maydenhod from euery wight
To no man deigned hir for to be bonde

But atte laste hir freendes han hir maried
To Odenake a gentyl of that contree
Al were it so that she hem longe taried
And ye shul understonde how that he
Hadde wiche fantasies as hadde she
But natheless whan they were fully in peace
They lyued in ioye and in felicitee
ffor eche of hem hadde oothey-lief and deere

MS +

Thonke

Saue o thyng/ that she wolde neue assente
Hir no wey/ that he sholde hir hyr lye
But ones/ for it was hir pleyn entente
To haue a child/ the worlde to multiplye
And also soone/ as pt she myghte espye
That she was nat with childe/ pt that dede
Thanne wolde she suffre hym/ non his fantasye
Eft soone/ and nat but ones out of drede

And if she were with childe/ at thilke tyme/
Anoon/ sholde he pleyen thilke game
Til fully/ fourty dayes/ weren past/
Thanne wolde she ones/ suffre hym do the same
Al were this Quedake/ wilde or tame
He gat anoon of hyr/ for thus she seyde
It was to vyues/ lecherye and shame
In oothey wyse/ if pt men pt hem pleyde

Two ones/ hir Quedake hadde she
The whiche she kepte/ in vertu and settyng
But nowe/ vn to oure tale/ tyme be
I seye/ so worshipful a creatur
And eyr they with/ and large pt mesure
So penyble in the werre/ and entente she
Anoon labour/ myghte in werre endure
Was noon/ though al this world men wolde eke

Hir riche array/ ne myghte nat be told/
As wel in vessel/ as in hyr clothyng/
She was al clad/ in perre and in gold/
And eek/ she lafte noght/ for noon huntyng/
To haue of sondry tonges ful knowyng/
Whan pt she leyser hadde/ and for to entende
To lerne bookes/ was al hyr lykyng/
Hyr she in vertu/ myghte hir self defende

And shortly/ of this proces for to trete
So worthy was hir housbonde and eek she
That they conqueren/ many regnes grete
In the Orient/ with many a fair cite
Apertenaunt/ vn to the magestee
Of Rome/ pt strong hond held hem ful faste
Ne neede myghte/ hir foo men doon hem flee
Ay/ whil that Quedakes dayes laste

Hir batailles/ who so list hem for to rede
Agayn Antor the kyng/ and othere mo
And how al this was fil in dede

Why she conqueres and what title they to
And after of his westhief And his so
Hoste pt she was / biseged And ytake
Lat him / Ou to my maistey pet hat go
That writ ynough of this I wndeytake

Whan Diedake was ded / she mightily
The regnes held / And et his tyme hould
Agayn his foos / she faught so cruelly
That they nas kyng / ne pryncē ū al that lond
That he nas glad / if he that grace fond
That she ne holde / vp on his lond werreye
With his / they made alliance by bond
To been ū pees / And lete his vse & pleye

The Empoy of Rome Claudius
Me hym bifore / the Romayn Galien
Me dorste nesse / been so corragens
Me noon Eyptyen / ne noon Egiptien
Me Surien / ne noon Arabyen
With ynne the feelder / that dorste et hym fighte
Lest that she holde / hem et hy handes olen
Or with his meignee / putten hem to flighte

In kynges habit / Kepte hy wnes tho
As heires / of his fadres regnes alle
And Hermanno / and Thymalcho
His nawes keye / as Persens hem calle
But ay ffortune / hath ū his so hy galle
This mighty queene / may no child endure
ffortune / out of his regne made his falle
To wrecchednesse / and to myschaunce

Aurelian / whan that the gouvnaunce
Of Rome / cam ū to his handes tweye
He shoop vp on this queene to doon vengeance
And with his legions / he took his weye
Toward Denobie / and shortly for to seye
He made hy flee / and atte laste his heste
And fetteres his / and eek his children tweye
And wan the lond / and hoom to Rome he went

Amonges otheye thynges / that he wan
His chaar pt was et gold wroght and preyse
This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
Hath et hym lad / for that men sholde it see
Biforn his triumphe / walketh shee
With gilte cheynes / on hy nekke hangynge

Tyrone

Colored was she / after hir degree
And ful of pryce / thayres hir clothynge

Allas fortune / she that whilom was
Redeful / to kynges and to Emperoures
Nowe gaynyth al the pepl / on hir allas
And she / that helmed was in stalke flowres
And was hir forte / to knes stronge Towres
Shal on hir heed / nowe bere a vitremyte
And she that bay / the reptle ful of flowres
Shal bere a distaf / hir tostes for to quyte

Al though / that nero bere vices
As any feend / that lith in helle adoun
yet he / as telleth vs Petronius
This clyde knyght / hadde in subiection
Bothe est & west / north / and septentrioun
Of Rubies / saphires / and of perles white
Were alle his clothes / broudes up and doun
For he in gemmes / greetly gan delite

Moore delicat / moore pompous of array
Moore proud / was nede Emperour than he
That ilke cloth / pt he hadde worn o day
After that tyme / he nolde it nede see
Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plente
To fisshe in Tybre / whan hym list pleye
His lustes were al lacke / in his degree
For fortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye

He Rome brende / for his delicate
The Senatours / he slowe up on a day
To herke / how men wolde wepe and crie
And slowe his brother / and by his suster lay
His moodes made he / in pitous array
For he / hir wombe slitte / to biholde
Where he conceyved was so wikkedly
That he so litel / of his moodes tolde

No teere out of his eyen / for that oghte
Ne cam / but seyde / a fair woman was she
Ful wondres / hoot pt he koude / or myghte
Be domesman / of hir desir beautee
Whan hym to bryngen hym commanded she
And shank / anon / noon oother / wolde he made
Whan myght is ioyned vn to cruelte
Allas to deye / wol the veryn wade

In youthe a maistey hadde this Eupony
To tecche hym lettyne and tupteiye
ffor of moralitee he was the flowr
As in his tyme but if bookes lye
Thus whil this maistey hadde of hym maistrye
He makes hym so lompyng and so lokpld
That longe tyme it was ey tyrannye
Or any vice dorste on hym uncokpld

This Seneca of which that I deuyse
By cause Nero hadde of hym office dyde
ffor he fro vices wolde hym chastise
Discreetly as by lord and nat by dede
Wel wolde he seyn an Emperour moot nede
Be vertuous and hate tyrannye
ffor which he in a bath made hym to blede
On bothe his armes til he moste dye

This Nero hadde eek of aturtunance
In youthe agayns his maistey for to ryse
Which afterwayde hym thoughte grect grevance
Therfore he made hym dyen in this wise
But natheles this Seneca the wise
Chees in a bath to dye in this maneye
Rather than han any other tormentise
And thus hath Nero slayn his maistey deye

Now fil it so that fortune liste no lenger
The hye pryde of Nero to chepice
ffor though pt he was strong yet was she strenger
She thoughte thus by gods I am to nyce
To sette a man that is fulfild of vice
In heigh degree and Emperour hym calle
But god out of his sete and wol hym tryce
Whan he leest wenth comest thal he falle

The peple roos upon hym on a nyght
ffor his defaute and whan he it espied
Out of his doores anon he hath hym dight
Allone and they he wende han been allied
He knokkes faste and ay the more he cried
The fastey shette they the doores alle
ffor drede of this hym thoughte pt he dyed
And wente his wey no lenger dorste he calle

The peple cride and ronneden up and doun
That at his eyen hede he hoot they dyde
Where is this false tyraunt this Nero

¶ Nyonke

ffor feye almoost out of his wit he cheyde
And to his goddes pitously he preyde
ffor socour but it myghte nat bityde
ffor drede of this hym thoughte pt he deyde
And ran in to a gardyn hym to hyde

And in this gardyn foond he cheyles tweye
That eeten hy a fyr sweet and reed
And to thise cheyles two he gan to preye
To sleen hym and to gyden of his heed
That to his body pan pt he deye deed
Keye no despit ydoon for his defaute
Hym self he sloo he koude no bettre reed
Of which fortune lough and hadde a game

¶ De Olofeme

Was nede Capitayn vndey a kyng
That regnes tho putte in subiection
Ne strenger was in feeld of alle thyng
As in his tyme ne gretter of renoun
Ne moore lompous in heigh pumption
Than Olofeme which fortune ay kiste
So likerously and hadde hym vp and doun
Til pt his heed was of ey pt he wiste

Wat oonly that this world hadde hym in ese
ffor lesyng of richesse or liberte
But made eny man reneyen his lawe
Nabugodonosor was god seyde hee
Noon oothey god sholde adoured bee
Agayns his heeste no wight dorste trespace
Saue in Bethulia a strong citee
Where Eliachim a preest was of that place

¶ Et fecerunt filij Israel sicut
ipsi constituerat eis archos-
dus Eliachim

But tauh kepe of the deeth of Olofeme
And of his hoost he stroke day a nyght
With inne his tente large as is a beme
And yet for al his pomp and al his myght
Judith a womman as he lay al nyght
Slepynge his heed of smoot and fleem his tente
And pryuely she stal fleem eny wight
And with his heed vn to hir toun she wente

¶ De rege Anthiocho
illustri

What needeth it of kyng Anthiochus
To telle his hye royal magestee
His hye pryde his werres venymus
ffor eche wheth another was they noon as he
Were wiche pt he was in mathabee
And rede the proude lettres that he sente

And thus he fil fro heigh prosperitee
And in an hat sodeyn wrecchednesse he dyde

Fortune hym hadde enhaunced so in pryde
That verily he wende he myghte atteyne
Vn to the sterres vpon euery syde
And in balaunce weyen ech mountayne
And alle the floodes of the see restreyne
And goddes peple hadde he moost in hate
Hem wolde he sleen in tormentes and in peyne
Wenynge pt god ne myghte his pryde abate

And for that Nichanore and thy mother
Of Jewes weyen veniquysshed myghtily
Vn to the Jewes with an hate hadde so
That he bad greithen his chaar ful hastily
And scoor and seyde ful despitously
Vn to Jerusalem he wolde eft soone
To wreken his ire on it ful cruelly
But of his purpos he was let ful soone

God for his manace hym scoor smoot
With invisible wounde ay incurable
That in his guttes entred it so and soot
That his peynes weyen importable
And certeinly the werke was resonable
For many a mannes guttes dide he peyne
But from his purpos cursed and damnable
For al his ernest he wolde hym nat restreyne

But bad anon apparaillen his hoost
And sodeynly er he was of it war
God daunted al his pryde and al his boost
For he so scoor fil out of his char
That it his lemes and his skyn totar so that
So that he neyther myghte go ne ryde
But in a chayer men aboute hym bar
Al forbrused bothe bak and syde

The wreche of god hym smoot so cruelly
That thurgh his body wikked wormes crepte
And they with al the stank horribly
That noon of al his meynee pt hym kepte
Whether so he wook or elles slepte
Ne myghte nought for stynk of hym entre
In this meschief he wayted and eek wepte
And knewe god lord of euery creature

Prologus

To al the hoost/ and to hym self also
fful ofstandeth was /the thynk/ of his comynge
So man/ ne myghte hym bep/ to me fro
And in this thynk/ and this horrible peyne
he stayf ful greatheedly/ in a wayteynge
Thus hath this robbour/ and this honycide
That many a man/ made to wepe and pleyne
Wyth gyledon/ as bilongeth vn to pryde

The Alexandre

The storie of Alisaundre/ is so commune
That every wight/ that hath discreccion
hath herd somwhat/ or al/ of his fortune
This wyde worlde/ as in conclusion
he wan by strengthe/ or for his hye renon
They weren glad/ for pees vn to hym sende
The pryde/ of man and beeste/ he leyde adown
Wher so he came/ vn to this worldes ende

Comparisoun myghte nevere yet ben maked
Bitweyen hym/ and another conquerour
ffor al this worlde/ for drede of hym hath quaked
he of knyghthod and of fredom flour
ffortune hym made/ the heir of hire honour
Save Cryn and Cesar/ no man myghte atteyne
his hye entente in armes and labour
So was he ful/ of honyn corage

What pris were it to hym/ though I yow tolde
Of Darius/ and an hundred thousand mo
Of kynges/ princes/ erles/ dukes/ bolde
Which he conquered/ and brought hem in to wo
I seye/ as fer as man may ryde or go
The world was his/ what sholde I more devyse
ffor though I recite/ or tolde yow al this mo
Of his knyghthode/ it myghte nat suffise

Wel wyder he regned/ as erth wyt habbe
Philippes sone of Macidoyne he was
That first was kyng/ in Grece the contree
O worthy gentil Alisaundre alias
That ever sholde falle eyther so cas
Empoysoned/ of thyn owene folk thou weep
Thy syde ffortune/ hath turned vn to pas
And for thee/ ne wep she nevere a teep

Who shal me yeven teeris to compleyne
The deeth of gentillesse/ and of fraunchise
That al the worlde/ deeide in hir deyneyne

¶ Thonk ¶

And yet hym thoughte / it myghte nat suffise
So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
False fortune / and poyson to despise
The shrewe two / of al this sorwe I wryte

By wisedom / manhede / and by labour
From humble bed / to roial magestee
Up roos he Julius the Conquerour
That wan al thoccident / by land and see
By strengthe of hand / or elles by tretee
And unto Rome / made hem tributaire
And sithe of Rome / the Empire was he
Til that fortune / wex his adversaire

¶ De Julio Cesare ¶

O mighty Cesar / that in Thessalie
Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lacke
That of the Orient / hadde al the chivalrie
As fer / as y^t the day bigynneth dacke
Thou thrugh thy knyghthod / hast hem take and slacke
Save fewe folk / that with Pompeus fledde
Thrugh which thou puttest / al thorient in wo
Thanke fortune / that so wel the spedde

¶ De Pompeio ¶

But now a litel while / I wol bigynne
This Pompeus / this noble governour
Of Rome / which that fleigh at this bataille
I seye / com of hise men / a fals traitour
His hees of smoot / to speken hym of shame
Of Julius / and hym the hees he bigatte
Allas Pompeye / of Orient conquerour
That fortune / lay to whom thee bigatte

To Rome again / repaireth Julius
With his triumphe / laureat ful hye
But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
That ek hadde / of his hye estaat envye
Ful privily / hath made conspiracye
Agayns this Julius / in subtil wise
And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
With boydekyns / as I shal yow devyse

This Julius / to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day / as he was wont to goon
And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
This false Brutus / and his other foon
And stikede hym / with boydekyns anoon
With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye

Thomas

But nede gyonte he / at no othoos / but oon
Or elles at tweo / but if his ostrie slye

So manly / was this Julius of heyte
And so wel loued / estaatly honestee
That / though his deedly wounides soore smote
His mantel / ouer his eyen caste he
ffor no man / sholde seen his pitee
And as he lay / of dyyng / un a traunce
And wiste verily / that ded was he
Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce

Lucan / to thee / this storie I recommende
And to Suetoun / and to Valeryus also
That of this storie / written word and dede
Sooth p^t / to thise grete conqueroures two
ffortune was first freend / and oo the foo
Tho whan he twiste / up on hyr fauour longe
But sprang hyr / un awayt / for euele unoo
Ertheesse / on alle thise conqueroures stronge

Cresus

Thus wrote Cresus / whilom kyng of lyde
Of whom Cresus / clepe sooth hym thynke
yet was he caught / amyddes al his pryde
And to be brent / men to the fyr hym ladde
But with a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde
That slook the fyr / and made hym to escape
But to be lay / no grace yet he hadde
Til ffortune / on the galwes / made hym gape

Whanne he escaped was / he kan nat schute
ffor to bigynne / a newe werre ageyn
he wende wel / for p^t ffortune hym oute
With hap / that he escaped thurgh the reyn
That of his foos / he myghte nat be slayn
And eek a schrewe / up on a nyght he mette
Of which he was so proud / and eek so fayn
That un vengeaunce / he al his hepe sette

Up on a tree / he was / as that hym thoughte
Ther-iupiter / hym wesh / bothe bak and syde
And Mercurie / eek / a fair / to warne hym broughte
To doon hym bathe / and they / forgat hir pryde
And to his doghter / that stood hym biside
Which p^t he knew / un heigh science habounde
He bad hyr / tellen hym / what it signyfyde
And she his dreem / bigan up right thus expounde

Tragedies

The tree quod she, the galwes is to meene
And Iuppiter betokneth rayn and weyn
And Phebus, lo his torches all clene
Tho been the domes leaues for to seyn
Thou shalt anhanged be, fadey peynte
Eeyn shal thee drasshe, and downe shal thee dwyne
Thus sayned hym ful plat and ful pleyn
His doghtey, which that called was Aschanye

An hanged was Cresus the proude kyng
His ioyal trone, myghte hym nat availle
Tragedies, noon other maner thyng
Ne kan ne synge, ye no wight shal counseille
But that Fortune, alderey vers assaille
Lo vitrak clook, the vegnes pt been proude
For whan men trusteth hyr, thanne wol she faille
And couth hyr byghte face, with a clowde

Noble, o. worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne
Whom Fortune held so hye in magestee
Wel oughten men, thy pitous deeth complayne
Out of thy lande, thy brother made thee flee
And after, at a seege by subtilte
Thou were bitrayed, and lad vn to his tente
Where as he, with his owene hand slouh thee
Succedinge in thy regne and in thy rente

The feeld of snow, with tregle of blak ymme
Caught with the hynenod, colowred as the gleede
He bleew this mysdeuesse, and al this synne
The wikked nest, was werker of this neede
Wight Charles Olyuer, that took ay heede
Of trouthe and honour, but of auncre
Genyloun Olyuer, corrupt for meede
Espoyle this worthy kyng, in swich a wyse

Worthy Petro, kyng of Cipre also
That Alisandre can by heigh maistrie
Ful many an hethen, myghteful of do
Of which thyne owene liges hadde envie
And for no thyng, but for thy chyualrie
They in thy bed han slayn thee by the morwe
Thus kan Fortune hir wheel gouerne and gye
And out of Ioye, bryngen men to sorwe

Of Egelau, grete Babilan Tyrannt
Sone of Belit, and soudan of Babyloyne
Thy sholde I nat, thyn infortune acounte

De Petro Rege Hispanie

De Petro Rege de Cipr

De Egalaud de Babilon

Thomas

Sith yu estatt thou dounde seye so hye
Thy brother one that was thy double allye
ffor he thy neveu was and one yu lacke
Sith yuno his prison made thee to dye
But shy ne hold most p^t thou seye alacke

De Hugelino comite de Pize

ff the ek Hugelyn of Pyze the langour
Ther may no tonge telle for pitee
But litel out of Pize stant a tour
In which tour yu prison put was he
And with hym been his litel children thre
The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age
Allas fortune it was greet cruelte
Swithe hidde for to putte yu swich a cage

Dampned was he to dyen in that prison
For enuye which p^t bisshop was of Pize
Hadde on hym uward a fals suggestion
Thurgh which the peple gan upon hym rise
And putten hym to prison yu swich wise
As ye han herd and nete and drynke he hadde
So smal that vnnethe it may suffise
And therwith al it was ful poure and badde

And on a day bifil p^t in that tour
Ther p^t his mete wont was to be brought
The gayler shette the dores of the tour
He herde it wel but he spak nght nought
And in his herte anon they fil a thought
That they for hunger wolde doon hym dyen
allas quod he allas that I was wrought
Therwith the teres fillen from his eyen

His yonge sone that thre yeer was of age
Un to hym seyde fadey fadey shy do ye seye
Sanne wol the gayler bringen oure potage
Is there no morsel breed that ye do keye
I am so hungry that I may nat sleye
Now wolde god that I myghte sleepen eke
Thanne sholde nat hunger in my stomak wepe
Ther is no thyng but breed that me keye lenge

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye
Til yu his fadres barm adoun it lay
And seyde faye wel fadey I moot dye
And kiste his fadey and dyde the same day
And whan the wofful fadey deed it say
For wo his armes two he gan to byte

Thous

And seyde Allas ffortune and weylaway
Thy falso vssel wil y wo al wrey3 ycwyte

Hise children weende that it for hunger was
That he hise armes gnoste and nat for wo
And seyde fadir so nat so allas
But fatheer ete thee flesh vp on vs two
Our flesh thou yaf. take our flesh vs fro
And ete ynogh right thus they to him seyde
And after that with mete a day or two
They leyde hem in his lappe adoun and deyde

Hym self despeyred eek for hunger staf
Thus endes is this mighty Esl of prise
ffortune hath ystaat ffortune ageyn hym caft
Of this tragedie it ogh3te ynough suffise
Who so wol here it in a lenger wise
Redeth the grete poete of ytaille
That highte Dant. for he can al devyse
ffro point to point. nat o word wol he faille

Explicit tragedy

Here stynteth the knyght the wyne of his tale

The prologe of the Nonnes preestes talo

Ho quod the knyght good ore nameore this
That ye han seyd is right ynough ywis
And muchel more for litel hevynesse
Is right ynough to muche folk I gesse
I seye for me it is a greet disese
Where as men han been in greet welthe and ese
To heeren of hir sodeyn fal allas
And the contrarie is ioye and greet solas
As whan a man hath been in poure estaat
And clymbeth up and waxeth fortunaat
And there abydeth in prosperitee
Swich thyng is glad thyng as it thynketh me
And of swich thyng were good for to telle
Ye quod our hoost by seint Poules belle
Ye seye right sooth this monk he clappeth loude
He spak how ffortune ouer hym hath a cloude

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I moot nede what and also of a tragedie
Right nouȝt ye seyde and pardee no remedie
It is for to biwaille ne compleyne
That ys ydon and als it is a peyne
As ye han seyd to hem of hevynesse
Our monk namoore of this do god youȝ blesse
Youre tale anoyeth al this compaignye
Wich talkyng is nat worth a botey flye
For they pinne is they no desport ne game
Wherfore oure monk dan Piers by youre name
I pray youȝ hertely telle us somwhat elles
For certeynly nere thynkyng of youre belles
That on youre bridel hange on everyy syde
By heuene kyng that for us alle dyde
I holde er this han fallen down for sleep
Al thogh the slough had ne ben so deep
Thanne hadde youre tale al be toold vn veyn
For certeynly as that thise clerkes seyn
Where as a man may have noon audience
Nought helpeth it to telle his sentence
And wel I woot the substance is in me
If any thyng shal wel reported be
Sir sey somwhat of hunting I youȝ preye
Nay quod this monk I have no lust to pleye
Nouȝt lat another telle as I have toold
Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche & boold
And seyde vn to the Monnes preest anon
Com neer thou preest com hyder thou sir John
Telle us somwhat thyng as may oure hertes glade
Be blithe though thou ryde upon a jade
What though thyn hors be bothe foul and lene
If he wol serve thee rekke nat a bene
Looke that thyn herte be merye evermo
Yis sir quod he yis hoost so moot I go
But I be myrie ywis I wol be blamed
And right anon his tale he hath attamed
And thus he seyde vn to us everichon
This wexte preest this goodly man sir John

Explicit

Here begynneth the Nonnes preestes tale of the Cok and hen Chauntecleer and Dame Pertelote

Throughe Egipte ondeel straunge in age
Ther Hilton dwellyng in a narwe cotage
Biside a grene stondynge in a dale
This widwe of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day that she was last a wyf
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf
For litel was hir catel and hir rente
By housbondrie of which as god hir sente
She foond hir self and eek hir doghtren two
Three large sowes hadde she and namo
Three kyen and eek a sheep that highte Malle
Ful sooty was hir bour and eek hir halle
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel
Of poynaunt sauce hir needed neer a deel
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte
Hir diete was accordant to hir cote
Repleccioun ne made hir neer sik
Attempree diete was al hir phisik
And exercise and hertes suffisaunce
The goute lette hir no thyng for to daunce
Napoplexie shente nat hir heed
No wyn ne drank she neither whit ne reed
Hir bord was served most of whit and blak
Milk and broun breed in which she foond no lak
Seynd bacon and sometyme an ey or tweye
For she was as it were a maner deye
A yeerd she hadde enclosed al aboute
With stikkes and a drye dych aboute
In which she hadde a cok hight Chauntecleer
In al the land of crowing nas his peer
His voys was murier than the murie orgon
On messedayes that in the chirche gon
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his logge
Than is a clokke or an abbey orlogge
By nature knew he ech ascencioun
Of the equynoxial in thilke toun
For whan degrees fifteene were ascended
Ne creep he crew that nyghte nas nat ended
His comb was redder than the fyn coral
And batailled as it were a castel wal
His bile was blak and as the jet it shoon
Lyk asure were his legges and his toon
His nayles whitter than the lylie flour
And lyk the burned gold was his colour

Robt Nytpold

THis gentil cok hadde in his goinaunce
Seuene hennes for to doon al his plesaunce
Whiche eeke his sustres and his paunons
And Sondry hyk to hym as of tolouys
Of Whiche the fayeste heeed on hy thyote
Was cleped faire Damoyselle pertelote
Curteys she was discreet and debonaire
And compaignable and bar hyr self so faire
Syn thilke day that she was seuen nyght old
That truely she hath the herte in hold
Of Chauntecleer loken in euery lith
He louede hyr so that wel was hym therwith
And with a ioye was it to seye how myne
Whan that the brighte sonne began to scryne
In sexte acorde uprist his lief is sayen in londe
For thilke tyme as I stode vnderstonde
Beestes and briddes koude speke and synge
And so bifel that in the dawenynge
As Chauntecleer among his wyues alle
Sat on his perche that was in the halle
And next hym sat this faire pertelote
This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his thyote
As man that in his dreem is dretheles
And Whan that pertelote thus herde hym grone
She was agast and seyde o herte deere
What eyleth yow to grone in this manere
Ye ben a verray sleper fy for shame
And he answerde and seyde thus madame
I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief
By god me thoughte I was in grete meschief
Right now and that yet myn herte is sore afright
Now god quod he my swenene recche aright
And kepe my body out of foul prisoun
That me mette how that I romed vp and doun
Within our yerde where as I saugh a beest
Was lyk an hound and wolde han maad arreest
Vpon my body and han had me deed
His colour was bitwixe yelow and reed
And tipped was his tayl and bothe his eres
With blak vnlyk the remenant of his heres
His snoute smal with glowynge eyen tweyne
Yet of his look for feere almoost I deye
This caused me my gronyng doutelees
Allas quod she for by that god above
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love
I kan nat love a coward by my feith
For certes what so any woman seith

Prest.

Se alle desiren / if it myghte bee
To han housbondes / hardy wise and free
And secree / and no nygard / ne no fool
That spille / pt is agast of euery tool
Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
Hous dorste ye seyn for shame / vn to youre loue
That any thyng / myghte make yous afeyd
Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a heyd
Allas / and konne ye been agast of swevenys
Ne thyng god woot / but vanitee in swevene is
Swevenes engendren of replecciouns
And ofte of fume / and of complectiouns
Whan humours / been to habundant / in a wight
Ofte tymes this dreem / which ye han met to nyght
Comth / of grete superfluytee
Of youre rede Colera parde
Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes / and of fyr / with rede lemes
Of grete beestes / that they wol hem byte
Of contek / and of wrthes / grete and lyte
Right as the humour / of malencolie
Causeth ful many a man / in sleep to crie
For feere of blake beres / or boles blake
Or elles / blake develes / wole hem take
Of othere humours / koude I telle also
That werken many a man / in sleep ful wo
But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
Lo catoun / which pt was so wys a man
Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
Now sire quod he / whan ye flee fro the bemes
For goddes loue / as taak / som laxatif
Vp pil of myn / conscience / and of myn lif
I conseille youre the beste / I wol nat lye
That bothe of colere / and of malencolye
Ye purge youre / and for ye shal nat taryen
Though in this toun / is noon apothecaryen
I shal myself / to herbes techen you
That shul been / for youre heele / and for youre prow
And in our yeerd / tho herbes shal I fynde
The whiche han / of hir propretee by kynde
To purge you / bynethe and eek above
Forget nat this / for goddes owene loue
Ye been ful colerik / of complexioun
Ware the sonne / in his ascencioun
Ne fynde you nat repleet / of humours hoote
And if it do / I wol yeve you a bote
That ye shul have / a fevere tertiane
Or an ague / that may be youre bane

A day or two / ye shul haue digestiues
Of herines / er ye take youre laxatiues
Of lacspol / centaury / and fumetere
Or elles of ellebor / that groweth there
Of catapuce / or of Gaitrys berys
Of hbe yue growyng / in oure yeerd / they mowe is
Pekke hem up right as they growe and ete hem yn
Ne myne housbonde / for youre fader kyn
Deyeth no deem / I kan oey youre nanoure
Dan quod he / graunt mercy of youre loore
But nathelees / as touchyng / Dan Catoun
That hath of ech / such a greet renoun
Though that he bad / no dremes for to drede
By god / men may / in olde bookes rede
Of many a man / more of auctorite
Than ever Caton was / so moot I thee
That al the revers seyn / of this sentence
That han ful founden by experience
That dremes / been significations
As wel of joye / as of tribulations
That folk enduren / in this lif present
Ther need eth / make of this noon argument
The dayes preeve / sheweth it in dede
Lo / of the gretteste auctour / p^t men rede
Seith thus / p^t kyng Cenulon the wys kynge
Hath in his lif / many a wis tokenynge
Right / by his dremes / while he was in lyf
Before his deth / he bad his sone purvey f
For many a dreem / ful wel / he may it see
And so bifel / that longe er it were day
This man mette in his bed / ther as he lay
How p^t his felawe / gan upon him calle
And cryde alias / for in an Oxes stalle
This nyght I shal be mordred / ther I lye
Now help me deere brother / or I dye
In alle haste / quod he / come to me he cryde
But man out of his sleep / for feere abrayde

But whan that he was slayne of his sleep
he tyrned hym and took of it no keep
hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanite
Thus ofte in his slepyng dremed hee
and atte thirde tyme yet his felawe
Cam as hym thoughte and seyde I am nowe slawe
Byhoold my bloody woundes deepe and wyde
Arys up erly in the morwe tyde
and at the west gate of the town quod he
A carte ful of donge they shalt see
In which my body is hid ful prively
Do thilke carte arresten boldely
My gold caused my mordre sooth to sayn
And told hym every point how he was slayn
With a ful pitous face pale of hewe
And truste wel his dreem he foond ful trewe
For on the morwe as soone as it was day
To his felawes in he took the way
And whan pt he cam to this oxes stalle
After his felawe he bigan to calle
The hostiler answerde hym anon
And seyde sire your felawe is agon
As soone as day he wente out of the toun
This man gan fallen in suspecioun
Remembrynge on his dremes pt he mette
And forth he gooth no lenger wolde he lette
Vn to the west gate of the toun and fond
A dong carte as it wey to donge lond
That was arrayed in that same wise
As ye han herd the dede man devise
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeance and Iustice of this felonye
My felawe mordred is this same nyght
And in this carte heere he lith gapyng vpright
I crye out on the ministres quod he
That shulden kepe and rewlen this Cite
Harrow allas heere lith my felawe slayn
What sholde I more vnto this tale sayn
The peple out sterte and carte the carte to grounde
And in the myddel of the dong they founde
The dede man that mordred was al newe
O blisful god that art so Iust and trewe
Lo here pt thou biwreyest mordre alway
Mordre wol out that see we day by day
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To god that is so Iust and resonable
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be
Though it abyde a yeer or two or three

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Thorde shold out this my conclusion
And right anon / mynistres of that toun
Han hent the Cartey / and so sone hym pyned
And eek the hostiley / so sore engyned
That they biknewe hy[r] wikkednesse anon
And eke an hanged by the nekke bon
Heere may men seen / p[t] yeres been to yede
And etes / in the same book / I rede
Right / in the nexte Chapitle after this
I gabbe nat / so have I joye or blis
¶ Adhuc de eodem ~ So men / that wolde han pass[ed] on see
For eteyn cause / in to a fey contree
If that the kyng / ne hadde been contrayre
That made hem / in a Citee for to tarye
That stood ful myry / upon an haven syde
But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
The kyng gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste
Jolif and glad / they weren in hy[r] leste
And token hem / ful ely for to saille
But herkneth / to that o man / fil a gret meruaille
That was of hem / in slepyng / as he lay
Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day
Hym thoughte / a man stood by his beddes syde
And hym comanded / p[t] he sholde abyde
And seyde hym thus / if thou to morwe wende
Thou shalt be dreynt / my tale is at an ende
¶ He woke / and tolde his felawe what he mette
And preyde hym / his viage to lette
As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
His felawe / that lay / by his beddes syde
Gan for to laughe / and scorned hym ful faste
What dreem rede he / quod he / my lyn heste agaste
That I shal lette / for to do my thynges
I sette nat a straw / by thy dreemynges
For comunes / been but vanytees and japes
Men dreme al day / of owles or of apes
And of many a maze / therwith al
Men dreme of thyng / p[t] neuer was ne shal
But wite[th] I wel / that thou lyst heere abyde
And thus for slouthen / wilfully thy tyde
God woot it reweth me / and have good day
And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way
But er p[t] he hadde half his cours ysayled
Noot I nat why / ne what myschaunce it ayled
But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
And ship and man / vnder the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes / it byside
That with hem sayled / at the same tyde

¶ Prestus

Thus they fore / false Petelote so deye
Thy suche ensamples olde / yet must[e] loye
That no man / sholde been to recheles
Of dremes / for I seye thee trouthelees
That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede

¶ De somnio scⁱ Kenelmi

In the lyf of seint Kenelm I rede
That was kenulphus sone / the noble kyng
Of mercenrike / how Kenelm mette a thyng
A lite er he was mordred / on a day
His norice / hym expowned ech[e] deel
His avysion / and bad hym for to kepe hym weel
For traison / but he nas but. vij. yeer old
And therfore / litel tale hath he toold
Of any dreem / so hooly is his heyte
Thy god / I hadde lete his legende / as have I.
Dame Pertelote / I seye yow trewely
Macrobeus / that writ the avision
In affryke / of the worthy Cipion
Affermeth dremes / and seith p^t they been
Warnynge of thynges / p^t men after seen
¶ And forthy / whoso / I praye yow looketh wel
In the olde testament / of Daniel
If he held dremes any vanitee
Reed eek of Joseph / and there shul ye see
Where dremes be somtyme / I seye nat alle
Warnynge of thynges / p^t shul after falle
Looke of Egipte the kyng / Dan Pharao
His bakere / and his butillere also
Who / they ne felte noon effect / in dremes
Who so wol seken actes / of sondry remes
May rede of dremes / many a wondre thyng

¶ Ad hunc de somnijs

Lo Cresus / which p^t was of lyde kyng
Mette he nat / that he sat up on a tree
Which signifie / he sholde anhanged be
Lo kenelm adrad / Ector / was his fader
That day / that Ector / sholde lese his lyf
He dremed / on the same nyght biforn
How p^t the lyf of Ector / sholde be lorn
For thilke day / he rood in to bataille
He wende wynne / but it myghte nat availle
He rood / for to fighte natheles
But he was slayn anon of Achilles
But thilke is al to longe for to telle
And eek it is my day / I may nat dwelle
Shortly I seye / as for conclusion
That I shal han / of this avision

Ardistee / and I seye forthey moor
That I ne telle of layatiues no moor
ffor they been veinymes / I woot it weel
I hem diffye I loue hem nevv a deel
But lat vs speke of myrthe / and stynte al this
Mydame Pertelote / so haue I blis
Of o thyng / god hath sent me large grace
ffor wham I se / the beautee of youre face
Ye been so strayght / reed / aboute youre eyen
It maketh / al my drede for to dyen
ffor also sikey / as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio
Mydame / the sentence / of this latyn is
Womman is mannes joye / and al his blis
ffor wham I feele a nyght / youre softe syde
Al be it / that I may nat / on yoke wyde
ffor prouue yche / is maad so nayfle allas
I am so ful of ioye / and of solas
That I diffye / bothe sweuene and dreem
And with that word / he flyh down fro the beem
ffor it was day / and eek his hennes alle
And with a chuk / he gan hem for to calle
ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yeerd
Real he was / he was maner aferd
And fetheres Pertelote / twenty tymes
And trad as ofte / er it was prymes
He looketh / as it were / a grym leoun
And on his toos / he roketh vp and doun
Hym deigned nat / to sette his foot to grounde
He chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde
And to hym rennen thanne / his wyues alle
Thus royal / as a prince is in an halle
Leue I this chaunteclee / in his pastue
And after / wol I telle / his auentue
Whan p[ro]t the monthe / in which the world bigan
That highte marche / whan god first makede man
Was complet / and passed were also
Syn marche bigan / thritty dayes and two
Bifel / that chaunteclee / in al his pryde
His seuene wyues / walkynge by his syde
Caste vp his eyen / to the brighte sonne
That in the signe of taurus / hadde ronne
Twenty degrees and oon / and somwhat moore
And knew by kynde / and by noon oothey loore
That it was prymes / and crew / wt blisful stevene
The sonne is entred / in gemyn vp on heuene
Fourty degrees and oon / and moore ywis
Mydame Pertelote / myn worldes blis

Prioresses tale

Heryeth this blissful maydes how they synge
And se the flessh flowes how they aprynge
Full is myn herte of reuel and solas
But soothly myn full a sorweful cas
For ende the lattre ende of ioye is wo
God woot pt worldly ioye is soone ago
And if a rethor koude faire endite
He in a cronycle saufly myghte it wryte
As for a souereyn notabilitee
Now euery wys man lat myn herkne me
This storie is also trewe I undertake
As is the book of launcelot de lake
That women holde in ful gret reuerence
Now holde I come again to myn sentence

A colfox ful of sly iniquite
That in the grove hadde woned yeres three
By heigh imaginacion forn cast
The same nyght thurgh out the hegges brast
In to the yerd ther chauntecleer the faire
Was wont and eek his wyues to repaire
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay
Til it was passed vndren of the day
Waityng his time on chauntecleer to falle
As gladly doon this homycides alle
That in a wayt ligge to mordre men
O false mordrour lurkyng in thy den
O newe scariot newe genylon
False dissymulour o greek synon
That broghtest troye al outrely to sorwe
O chauntecleer acursed be that morwe
That thou in to that yerd flaugh fro the bemes
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
That thilke day was perilous to thee
But what pt god forwoot must nedes be
After the opinion of certein clerkis
Witnesse on him that any parfit clerk is
That in scole is gret altercacion
In this matere and gret disputision
And hath been of an hundred thousand men
But I ne can nat bulte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour augustyn
Or boece or the bisshop bradwardyn
Whether that gods worthy forwityng
Streyneth me nedefully to doon a thyng
Nedely clepe I symple necessite
Or elles if free choys be graunted me
To do that same thyng or do it noght
Though god forwoot it er pt it was wroght

Petrus comestor

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+

Oz if his writyng/ stey̆neth nevva deel
But by̆ necessitee constreyneel
I wol nat han to do/ of swich mateeys
my̆ tale is of a cok/ as ye may̆ heeys
That took his conseil/ of his wyf wt sorwe
To walken in the yeerd/ upon that morwe
That he hadde met that drem/ pt I of tolde
Wommes conseils/ been ful ofte colde
Wommans conseil/ brogte us first to wo
And made adam/ out of paradys to go
Ther as he was ful myry̆e/ and wel at ese
But for I noot/ to whom it myght displese
Yf I conseil of wommen wolde blame
Passe over/ for I seye it in my̆ game
Rede auctours/ where they̆ trete/ of swich mateeys
And what they̆ seyn of wommen/ ye may̆ heeys
Thise been the cokkes wordes/ and nat myne
I kan noon harm/ of no womman devyne
Faire in the sond/ to bathe hir myrily
Lith pertelote/ and alle hir sustres by
Agayn the sonne/ and chauntecleer so free
Song murier/ than the mermayde in the see
For phisiologus/ seith sikerly
How pt they̆ singen wel and myry̆ly
And so bifel/ that as he caste his eye
Among the wortes/ on a boterflye
He was ware of this fox/ pt lay̆ful lowe
Wo thy̆ng/ us liste hy̆m thanne for to crowe
But cride anon cok/ cok/ and up he sterte
As man/ that was affrayed in his herte
For naturelly̆/ a beest/ desyreth flee
Fro his contrayre/ if he may̆ it see
Though he never er/ had seyn it wt his eye
This chauntecleer/ whan he gan him espye
He wolde han fled/ but that the fox anon
Seyde gentil sire/ allas why̆ wol ye gon
Be ye affrayed of me/ that am your freend
Now certes/ I wol be wo for than a feend
For I to yow wolde have don/ or vilanye
I am nat come/ your conseil for tespye
But trewely̆ the cause of my̆ comynge
Was only̆/ for to herkne how that ye synge
For trewely̆ ye have as myry̆e a stevene
As any̆ angel/ that is in heven
Therwith ye han in musyk more feelyng
Than had boece/ or any̆ pt kan synge
My̆ lord your fader/ god his soule blesse
And eek your moder/ of hir gentilesse

Thanne ñ myn yous ybeen to myn grect ese
And etes eye ful fayn wolde I yow plese
But for men speke of vylanye I wol yow seye
So moote I brouke wel myne eyen tweye
So moot I brouke wel myne eyen tweye
Save yow I nolde han yet vilanye
As dide youre fadre ñ the morweninge
Lo thus it was of herte al that he song
And for to make his voys the more strong
He wolde doon peyne hym that on bothe his eyen
He moste stonde on his tiptoon therwith al
And strecche forth his nekke long and smal
And eek he was of swich discrecion
That there nas no man ñ no region
That hym ñ song or wyssedom myghte passe
I have wel yad ñ daun Burnel the asse
Among his vers how that there was a cok
For that a prestes sone yaf hym a knok
Upon his leg whil he was yong and nyce
He made him for to lese his benefice
But certeyn there nys no comparyson
Bitwixe the wisedom and discrecion
Of youre fader and of his subtilte
Now synge I yow for seinte charitee
Let se can ye your fader counterfete
This chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete
As man that koude his tyme wel espie
So was he ravyshed with his flaterie
Allas ye lordes many a fals flatour
Is ñ youre cortes and many a losengeour
That plesen yow wel more by many fold
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow told
Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterye
Beth war ye lordes of hir trecherye
This chaunteclere stood hye upon his toos
Strecchynge his nekke and heeld his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nones
And daun Russell the fox stirte up atones
And by the gargat hente chaunteclere
And on his bak toward the wode hym bere
For yet ne was there no man that hym sewed
O destinee that mayst nat been eschewed
Allas that chaunteclere flegh fro the bemes
Allas his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes
And on a fryday fil al this meschaunce
O venus that art goddesse of plesaunce

Syn that thy seruant was this Chaunteclee
And in thy seruyce dide al his poweer
Moore for delit than wolde to multiplie
Thy goldestoke auffle Syn on thy day to dye
O Gaufred deere maistre soverayn
That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
With shot. compleynedest his deeth so soore
Thy no hadde I noght thy sentence and thy loore
The Friday for to thee as diden ye
For on a Friday sothly slayn was he
Whanne bolde Chaunteclee ysoke out p^t I sholde pleyne
For Chaunteclees drede and for his peyne
Certes ouch thy no lamentacion
Was neuer of ladyes maad whan Ylion
Was wonne and Pirrus ꝑ^t his streite swerd
Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the herd
And slayn hym as seith vs Eneydos
As maden alle the hennes in the clos
Whan they hadde seyn of Chaunteclee the sighte
But sothely Dame Pertelote shrighte
Full lowde than dide Hasdrubales wyf
Whan p^t hir housbonde hadde lost his lyf
And p^t the Romayns hadde brent Cartage
She was so ful of torment and of rage
That wilfully in to the fyr she stepte
And brende hir selven with a stedefast herte
O woful hennes right so cryden ye
As whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome cryden wommen for p^t hir housbondes
Loften alle hir lyues
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
Now turne I wolde to my tale agayn
This sely wydowe and eek hir doghtres two
Herden this hennes crie and maken wo
And out at dores stirten they anon
And syen the fox toward the grove gon
And bar vpon his bak the cok away
And cryden out harrok and weylaway
Ha. ha the fox and after hym they ran
And eek with staues many another man
Ran Colle our dogge and Talbot and Gerland
And malkyn with a dystaf in hir hand
Ran cow and calf and eek the verray hogges
So fered for berkyng of the dogges
And shoutyng of the men and wommen eek
The ronne so hem thought hir herte breek
They yolleden as feendes doon in helle
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle

The goos for feere flowen on the trees
Out of the hyde, cam the gaynn of bees
So hydous was the noyse, a benedicite
Quod he, jhe take stack and his meynee
Ne made neuer shoutes half so shille
Whan pt they wolden, auy fleemyng fulle
As thilke day, was maad vp on the fox
Of bras, they broghten bemes and of box
Of horn, of bon, in whiche they blewe and pouped
And they cryden all, they outen, and they houped
It semed as that heuene sholde falle
Now goode men, I pray yow herkneth alle
Lo, how fortune, turneth sodeynly
The hope, and pryde, of his enemy
This cok, that lay vpon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, vnto the fox he spak,
And seyde sire, if that I wiste as yit
Yet wolde I seyn, as wis god helpe me
Turneth again, ye proude cheples alle
A verray pestilence, vpon yow falle
Now I am come, vnto the wodes syde
Maugree youre heed, the cok shal heere abyde
I wol him ete in feith, and that anon
The fox answerde, in feith it shal be don
And as he spak that word, al sodeynly
This cok brak from his mouth delyuerly
And heighe vp on a tree, he flegh anon
And whan the fox, sawgh pt he was gon
Alas, quod he, o chauntecleer, alas
I haue to yow, quod he, ydoon trespas
In as muche, as I maked yow afeerd
Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of the yeerd
But sire I dide it, of no wikke entente
Com down, and I shal telle yow what I mente
I shal seye sooth to yow, god helpe me so
Nay thanne, quod he, I shrewe vs bothe two
And first I shrewe myn self, bothe blood & bones
If thou bigyle me, any oftener than ones
Thou shalt nanoore, thurgh thy flatering
Do me to synge, and crynke with myn eyen
For he that winketh, whan he shulde see
Al wilfully, god sende him neuer thee
Nay quod the fox, but god yeue him meschance
That is so, vndiscreet, of gouernance
That langleth, whan he shulde holde his pees
Lo swich it is, for to be recheles
And negligent, and trust on flatering
But ye that holden, this tale a folye

Seconde

As of a fox/ or of a cok and hen
Taketh the moralite/ goode men
ffor seint Paul seith/ pt al that writen is
To our doctrine/ it is ywrite ywis
Taketh the fruyt/ and let the chaf be stille
Now goode god/ if that it be thy wille
As seith my lord/ so make vs alle goode men Explicit dus Archiepus Cantuarien
And bringe vs/ to his heighe blisse Amen

Here is endes the Nonnes preestes tale

Hic prologe of the seconde Nonnes tale

The ministre and the norice/ vn to vices
Which that men clepe in Englisshe ydelnesse
That porter of the gate is/ of delices
To eschue/ and by hir contenance/ hir office
That is to seyn/ by resonable bisynesse
Shal ogh[te]n ye/ to doon al our entente
lest that the feend/ thurgh ydelnesse vs hente

ffor he/ that with his/ thousand wyles slye
Continuelly/ vs waiteth to bigyle
Than he may/ man/ in ydelnesse espye
He kan so lightly/ catche hym in his trappe
Til pt a man/ be hent/ right by the lappe
He nys nat ware/ the feend hath hym in honde
Wel ought[e] vs werche/ and ydelnesse withstonde

And though men dradden/ neuer for to dye
Yet seen men wel/ by resoñ doutelees
That ydelnesse/ is roten sloggardye
Of which there nis/ no good nowhere[s] ees
And seen/ pt slouthe/ it holdeth in a lees
Only to slepe/ and for to ete and drynke.
And to deuouren/ al that other swynke

And for to putte vs/ fro withe ydelnesse
That cause is/ of so gret confusioñ
I haue here doon/ my feithful bisynesse
After the legende/ in translacioñ
Right of thy glorious lif and passioñ
Thou crist thy gerlande wroght ful of rose & lilie
Thee meene I/ mayde and moodre Cecilie

Domine ne

And thow that flowr of virgines art alle
Of whom that nature list to clothe his lyte
To thee at myn bigynnyng first I calle
Thou confort of vs wrecches do me endite
Thy maydens deeth that wan thurgh hire myte
The ethnicel lyf and of the feendes victorie
As man may after reden in hire storie

Thow mayde and moodre doghtre of thy sone
Thow welle of mercy sinful soules cure
In whom that god for bountee chees to wone
Thow humble and heigh ouer ech creature
Thow nobledest ouer forthe owre nature
That no desdeyn the makere hadde of kynde
His sone in blood and flesshly to clothe and wynde

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
Took mannes shape the eternel love and pees
That of the tyme compas lord and gyde is
Whom erthe and see and heuene out of relees
Ay heryen and thou virgine wemmelees
Baar of thy body and dedelest maydenhede
The creatour of ech creature

Assembled is in thee magnificence
With mercy goodnesse and with pitee
That thou that art the sonne of excellence
Nat onely helpest hem that preyen thee
But often tyme of thy benygnytee
Ful freely er that men thyn help biseche
Thou goost biforn and art hire lyues leche

Now help thow meeke and Mayde Mariee
Lyk flemes enemy in this desert of galle
Thynk on the Cananee womman that cryde
That whelpes eten vnder of the crommes falle
That fro hire lordes table been ifalle
And though that I vnworthy sone of Eue
Be sinful yet accepte my bileue

And for that feith is deed without werkis
So for to werken yif me wit and space
That I be quit fro thennes that most derk is
O thou that art so fair and ful of grace
Be myn aduocat in that heighe place
Where as withouten ende is songe Osanne
Thow Cristes moodre doghter deere of anne

Aue of thyȝ lyght/ myȝ soule in prison lyghte
That troubled is/ bȳ the contagion
Of myȝ body/ and also bȳ the wyghte
Of eyther lyȝ lust/ and fals affection
O hauene of refute/ o saluacion
Of hem/ pt been in sorwe/ & in distresse
Now helpe/ for to myȝ werk ⁊ wel me dresse

Yet preye ⁊ yow/ pt reden that ⁊ write
Foryeue me/ that ⁊ do my diligence
This ilke storie/ subtilly to endite
For both haue ⁊ the wordes and sentence
Of hym/ that at the seintes reuerence
The storie wroot/ and folwen hys legende
⁊ praȳ yow/ that ye wole myȝ werk amende

Interpretacio nois ceralie/ quia ponit stat ⁊ acobȝ tamen ilegeȝ

Hyst wolde ⁊ the name of seinte Cecile
Expowne/ as men may in hys storie see
⁊ it is to seye in englysshe/ heuenes lilie
For pure chastnesse of virginitee
Or for she whytnesse hadde of honestee
And grene of conscience/ and of good fame
The softe swoote lilie/ was hyr name

Or ceralie is to seye/ the wey to blynde
For she ensample was/ bȳ good techynge
Or elles Cecile/ as ⁊ writen fynde
Is ioyned/ bȳ a manere conioynynge
Of heuene and lia/ and seeye in figurynge
The heuene is set/ for thoght/ of hoolynesse
And lia/ for hyr lastynge bisynesse

Cecile/ may eek be seyd/ in this manere
Wantynge of blyndnesse/ for hyr grete light/
Of sapience/ and for hyr thewes clere
Or elles loo/ this maydens name bright/
Of heuene and leos couth/ for which bȳ right/
men myghte hyr eek/ the heuens of peple calle
Ensample/ of goode/ and wise werkes alle

For leos/ peple in englysshe is to seye
And right as men may/ in the heuens see
The sonne and moone/ and sterres eldȳ weye
Right so men goostly/ in this mayden free
Syen of feith/ the magnanymytee
And eek/ the clernesse hool/ of sapience
And sondry werkes/ bright/ of excellence

¶ Lo nyght so as thise philosophres write
That heuene is ecrit and lound and eek clemynge
Right so was fayr Cecilie the white
fful ecrit and bisy eke in good werkynge
And lound and hool in good pseuerynge
And clemynge euere in chaste ful bisyly
Wok hallow yore secrees that she syghte

¶ Explicit

¶ Here begynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale of the lyf of Seinte Cecile

This mayden bright Cecile as hir lif certh
Was comen of Romayns and of noble kynde
And from hir cradel vp fostred in the ferth
Of Crist and bar his gospel in hir mynde
She neuere ces as prayeres day and ynde
Of hir prayere and god to loue and drede
Besekynge hym to kepe hir maydenhede

And whan this mayden sholde vn to a man
Ywedded be that was ful young of age
Which that ycleped was Valerian
And day was comen of his mariage
She ful devout and humble in hir corage
Vnder hir robe of gold that sat ful faire
Had next hir flesh yclad hir in an haire

And whil the orgues maden melodie
To god alone in hir herte thus sang she
O lord my soule and eek my body gye
Vnwemmed lest that it confounded be
And for his love that dyde vp on a tree
Sith seconde and thridde day she faste
Ay biddynge in hir orysons ful faste

The nyght cam and to bedde moste she gon
With hir housbonde as ofte is the manere
And prively to hym she seyde anon
O swete and wel biloued spouse dere
Ther is a conseil and ye wolde it kepe
Which that nyght fayn I wolde vn to yow depe
So that ye swere ye shul me nat bitrepe

Valerian gan faste vnto his wyfe
That for no wele ne thyng that myghte be
She sholde neuere mo vnwarned hym see
And thanne at eyen to hym thus seyde she
I haue an aungel which that louyth me
That with grete loue which I wake or slepe
Is redy ay my body for to kepe

And if he may feelen out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vileynye
He wyl anon with his dert you thryde
And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye
And if that ye in clene loue me gye
He wol yow louen as me for youre clennesse
And shewen you his joye and his brightnesse

Valerian corrected as god wolde
Answerde again if I shal trusten thee
Lat me that aungel se and hym biholde
And if that it a verray angel be
Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayed me
And if thou love another man for sothe
Right at this tyme thanne wol I vs both

Leese anoon right in this wise
That if yow list the angel shul ye see
So p^t ye trowe in crist and yow baptize
Goth forth to via apia quod she
That fro this town ne stant but myles three
And to the poure folkes p^t there dwelle
Sey hem right thus as that I shal yow telle

Telle hem that I Cecile yow to hem sente
To shewen you the goode vrban the olde
For secree thynges and for good entente
And whan that ye Seint vrban han biholde
Telle hym the wordes which that I to yow tolde
And whan p^t he hath purged your fro synne
Thanne shul ye se that angel er ye twynne

Valerian is to the place ygon
And right as hym was taught by his techynge
He foond this hooly olde vrban anon
among the Seintes buryeles lotynge
And he anon with outen tarynge
Dide his message and whan p^t he it tolde
Vrban for joye his handes gan vp holde

¶ Tro-Ronne ¶

¶ The teeris from hise eyen leet he falle
Almyghtty lord/ o thu Crist quod he
Godesey of thaast conseil hielde of vs alle
The fruyt of thilke seed of chastitee
That thou hast sowe in Cecile/ taak to thee
So lyk a bisy bee/ with outen gile
Thee semeth ay/ thyn owene thral Cecile

For thilke spouse/ that ose took nyght· nowe
Ful lyk a fieris leoun/ ose semeth heere
As mecke/ as ony/ was ony lomb to yowe
And with that word/ anon they gan appeere
An oold man/ clad in white clothes cleere
That hadde a book/ & lettre of gold in honde
And gan/ biforn Valerian to stonde

Valerian as deed/ fil down for dreede
Whan he hym saugh/ and he up herte hym tho
And on his book/ nyght thus he gan to reede
O· lord· o· feith· o· god with outen mo
O· Cristendom/ and fadey of alle also
Aboven alle/ ouey also/ ouey wheere
Thise words/ al with gold ywriten weere

Whan this was pas thamme seyde this olde man
Leneestow this thyng or no/ ley ye or nay
¶ leeue al this thyng/ quod Valerian
For or they thyng than this ¶ day del ony
Vndey the heuene/ no wight thynke may
Tho vanyssheth this olde man he myste wheere
And pope vrban/ hym christned nyght theere

¶ Valerian goeth hoom/ and fynt Cecilie
With inne his chambre/ with an angel stonde
This angel hadde/ of roses and of lilie
Corones two the whiche he bar in honde
And first to Cecile/ as ¶ vndey stonde
He yaf that con/ and after gan he take
That oothey/ to Valerian hym make

With body clene/ and with vnwemmed thoght
Keepeth ay wel/ this two corones tweye
Fro paradys to yow/ haue I heem broght/
Ne neueye no/ ne shal they yow seen
Ne lese hir soote sauour/ trusteth me
Ne neueye wight/ shal seen with eet his eye
But ho be chaast/ and hate vileynye

Seconde

And thus valerian for thus to coone
Assentedest to good counsel also
Sey what thee list and thou shalt han thy boone
I haue a brother quod valerian tho
That in this world I loue no man so
I pray yow that my brother may han grace
To knowe the trouthe as I do in this place

The angel seyde god liketh thy requeste
And bothe with the palme of martyrdom
Ye shullen come vn to his blisful feste
And vt that word Tiburce his brother coom
And whan that he the swoty vndernoom
Which that the roses and the lilies caste
Bifore his feete he gan to wondren faste

And seyde I wondre this tyme of the yeer
Whennes that coste swoty cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer
For though I hadde heer vn myne handes two
The swoty myghte vn neither go
The sweete smel pt in myn heste I fynde
Hath changed me al vn another kynde

Valerian seyde two corones han I
Swete white and rose reed that shynen cleer
Withe pt thyne eyen han no myght to see
And as thou smellest heer thurgh my preyere
So shalto seen heer leeue brother deere
If it so be thou folt vt outen doutho
Bileue aright and knowen verray trouthe

Tiburce answerde sestow this to me
In soothnesse or in dreem I heerde this
In dremes quod valerian han I be
Vn to this tyme brother myn ywis
And nowe at erst in trouthe oure dwelling is
Now sestow this quod Tiburce and in what wyse
Quod valerian that shal I thee devyse

The aungel of god hath me trouthe ytaught
Which thou shalt seen if that thou folt leeue
The ydoles and be cleene and elles naught
And of the myracles of this corones tweye
Dewt anbrose in his prefate list to seye
Solempnely this noble doctour deere
Devyseth hym and seith in this manere

The palm of martyrdom for to receyue
Seynte Cecile fulfild of goddes yrfte
The Kayls and eek his chaumbre gan she kepyn
Witnesse tybutes and Cecilles chirfte
To Cristo god of his bountee Kolde christe
Corones tuo of flowres Kel ouerlynge
And made his angel hem the corones bringe

The mayde hath brought men to Rome adoun
The Kayls hath Crist Khat it is Korth dwelyn
Deuocion of chaftitee to loue
The checked hym Cecile al openly and plelyn
That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn
ffor they been domb and they to they been deue
And chaunged hym his ydoles for to loue

Tho so that tho Kath nat this a beeft he is
Quod the Tibuire if pt ſhal nat be
And eke gan kiſſe his breſt · that ſeyde this
And Cras ful glad he Konde tourthe eſt ye
This day I take thee for myn alliye
Seyde this bliſful fayn maide deye
And after that · eke ſeyde as ye may heere

Tho ugly so as the deus of Cupit quod eke
Made me thy brotheres eyf · ugly in that Kise
Anon for myn allyee Cecy take I thee
Syn that thou Kolt thyne ydoles deſpiſe
Go et thy brother mock and thee baptiſe
And make thee clene so pt thou maſſe biholde
The angeles face of Crift thy brother tolde

Tibuire anſKeyde and ſeyde brother deere
ffirſt tel me Khidey pt I ſhal and to Khat man
To Khom quod he com forth et ugly good cheere
I Kol thee lede in to the poure dwan
Til Dwan brother myn valeyan
Quod tho Tibuire · Kolt Kow me Khidey lede
Me thynketh that it Kere a Kondey dede

Me meneſtow nat Dwan quod he tho
That is ſo ofte Damppned to be deed
And Kondeth in Kalkes alKey to and fro
And day nat ones putte forth his heed
Men ſholde hym brennen in a fyr ſo reed
If he Kere founde or pt men myghte hym atrye
And Kere alſo to dede hym tormentrye

And whi se oghen thise dñnitee
That is yhid in heuene preyuely
Algate yheris in this worlde shul ese be
To whom certis anskepde wolsely
yen myghten dreden skel and skilfully
This lyf to lese in ottene deepe pothey
Of this ceepe lyuynge oonly and noon oothey

But they is bettre lif in oothey place
That neuer shal be lost ne drede thee noght
Whith goddes sone os tolde thurgh his grace
That fadres sone hath alle thyng ywrought
And al that wrought is set a skilful thoght
The goost· that fro the fadey gan proceede
Hath ooke les hem with outen any dreede

Hy worde and hy myracle goddes sone
Whan he was in this worlde declayed heere
That they was oothey lyf they men may wone
To whom anskepde dibuyte o sothey leere
Se eyghtetoke nyght nooke in this maneere
They nyse but o god lorde in oothfastnesse
And nooke of three hooke may stoke beye witnesse

That shal I telle quod she ey I go
Right as a man hath sapience three
Memorie engyn and intellect also
So in beynge of dñnitee
The pisnes may they nyght wel bee
Tho gan she hym ful diligily to preche
Of cristes come and of his peynes teche

And manye pointes of his passion
Hoke goddes sone in this worlde was withholde
To doon mankynde pleyn remission
That was ybounde in synne and wikes wolde
Al this thyng· she vn to dibuyte tolde
And afey this dibuyte in good entente
With valeyan to pope vrban he wente

Qui & vrbanus
That thankes god and erth ylad seyte and ligh
He cristned hym and made hym in that place
Pfit in his lemynge goddes knyght
And afey this dibuyte gat swich grace
That euery day he augh in tyme and space
The aungel of god and euery maney doone
That he god ayes it was oped ful soone

At ese fil hap hy ordre for to seyn
Hou manye woundes thus for hem wroghte
But atte laste to tellen short and pleyn
The sergeauntz of the toun of Rome hem soghte
And hem bifore Almathe the Prefett brogte
Whiche hem opposed and euele al hir entente
And to the ymage of Jupiter hem sente

And seyde who so wolnat sacrifise
Schal of his hed this day sentence heye
Anon thise martirs p^t^ yong seyde
Non wayuinȝ that was an Officer
Of the prefectes and his Comaundement
Hem hente and schal he forth the wentes ladde
Hym self he wep for pitee that he hadde

Schal wayuinȝ had hem the wentes loore
He gat hym of the tormentours leue
And ladde hem to his hous and oute made
And with hir pleyinge ey that it seye eue
Thei gonnen flo the tormentours to leue
And flo wayuine and flo his folk echone
The false feith to forsake in god allone

Eerle tau schal it was woxen nyght
With preestes that hem cristnes alle yfeye
And after cam schal day was woxen light
Eerle hem seyde with a ful stedefast heye
Forsake alle ydey the werkes of derknesse
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse

Ye schal for sothe ydoon a gret batayle
Youre foos is doon youre forth schal ye wende
Thorth the grace of hym that may nat faille
The nightful fuge which p^t^ ye schal despise
Schal yeue it yow as ye schal it deserue
And schal this thyng was seyd as I deuyse
Hem ledde hem forth to doon the sacrifise

But schal they comen to the place bisyde
To tellen shortly the conclusioun
They nolde encense ne sacrifise yit nought
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and deuocioun
And loften both hir hendes in the place
Hir eules wenten to the kyng of grace

Seconde

This wayñus that cauȝht this thyng bitydе
With pitous teens / tolde it anon ryght
That he hir soules / cauȝht to heuene glydе
With aungels / ful of cleernesse and of light
And with this croȝd / counted many a knight
ffor which Almachius / dide hym so bete
With schrpe of leed / til he the lif gan lete

Cecile hym tooke / and buryed hym anon
Wȝ Tiburce and Valerian ofte sith
With pine hir buryng place vndey the stoon
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad hise ministres / feechen openly
Cecile / so that she myȝhte in his presence
Doon sacrifice / and ſupprey encense

But they counted at hir wise looze
Wepten ful sooze / and ȝauen ful credence
Vn to hir croȝd / and cryden euere and euere
That goddes ones / with outen difference
Is May god / this is ouyr sentence
That hath so good a seruant hym to serue
This with o voys / be tooken / thogh be sterue

Almachius / that sexte of this doynge
Bad feechen Cecile / that he myȝhte hir see
And alderfirst / to this was his axyng
What maner womman / artow quod he?
I am a gentil womman quod she
I axe thee quod he / though it thee greeue
Of thyn religion and of thy bileeue

Ye han bigonne / youre question folily
Quod she / that wolden two answeres conclude
In o demaunde / ye axed lewedly
Almache answerde / vn to that multitude
Of shennes couth thyn answeryng / so wide:
Of shennes quod she / whan pt she was freyned
Of conscience and of good feith vnfeyned

Almachius seyde / ne takestow noon heede
Of myn power / and she answerde hym
youre myght quod she ful litel is to dreede
ffor euery mortal mannes power nys
But lyk a bladdre ful of wynd ypuffed
ffor with a nedles poynt whan it is stoke
May al the boost of it be seyd ful soone

Tonne

Ful wrongfully bigonne thow quod he
And yet in wrong is thy pseuerance
Wostow nat how oure mighty princes flee
Han thus comanded and maad ordinance
That euy cristen wight shal han penitence
But if that he his cristendom withseye
And goon al quit. if ho wole it preeye

Thyne princes eyen as youre nobleye booth
Quod tho Cecile and with a wood sentence
Ye make me gilty and is nat sooth
For ye that knowen wel oure innocence
For as muche as me doon a reuerence
To crist and for me beye a cristen name
Ye putte on vs a cryme and eek a blame

But me that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous me thynketh it nat withseye
Almathe anseyde shees oon of thise two
Do sacrifice or cristendom reneye
That thou mowe nowt eschapen by that weye
At which the hooly blisful tyme maide
Wan for to langhe and to the juge saide

O juge confus in thy iniquite
Woltow that I reneye innocence
Do make me a wikked wight quod she
Lo he dissymuleth wel in audience
He stareth and he woodeth in his absence
To shewe almathius wrecchednesse
Ne woostow nat how my myght may strecche

Han nowt oure mighty princes to me yeuen
Ye bothe power and auctorite
To maken folk to dyen or to lyuen
Why spekestow so proudly thanne to me
I speke nowt but stedfastly quod she
Nat proudly for I speke as for my syde
Ne hatien deedly thilke vice of pryde

And if thou wene nat a sooth to seye
Thanne wol I cheke al openly by yght
That thou hast maad a ful greet lesyng heere
Thou seyst thy princes han thee yeuen myght
Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken a wight
Thou that ne mayst but only lyf bireue
Thou hast noon other power me no leue

Dennise

But thou mayst seyn thy ꝓuces han thee mated
Ayenste of seeth/ for if thou speke of me
Thou lyest/ for thy pokes ys ful naked
Do kep thy boldnesse/ eyde alwaythus tho
And sacrifie to owre goddes er thou go
And perse wat/ what thyng/ yt thou me proffe
For I can suffre it/ as a philosophre

But thilke thynges/ may I nat endure
That thou spekest/ of owre goddes heye/ quod he
Dorile and keyde/ o nyce creature
Thou seydest no thyng/ syn thou spak to me
That I me knette thy with thy nyeces
And that thou keye/ in euery manere wise
A lechers offices/ and a veyn justise

They lakketh no thyng/ to thyne outtey eyen
That thou nayt blynd/ for thyng/ yt we seen alle
That it is stoon/ yt men may wel espyen
That ilke stoon/ a god thou holt it calle
I rede thee/ lat thyn hand upon it falle
And taste it wel/ and stoon thou shalt it fynde
Syn that thou seest/ nat/ with thyne eyen blynde

It is a shame/ that we prest shal
Do croune thee/ and laughe at thy folye
For comunly/ men woot it wel oueral
That myghty god/ in his heuenes hye
And thise ymages/ wel thou mayst espye
To thee/ ne to hem self/ ne mowen nought profite
For in effect/ they been nat worth a myte

Thise wordes/ and ek richesse eyde she
And he ek clepeth/ and bad men sholde hy lede
Hem til hy hous/ and in hy[s] hous quod he
Wel wel hy[s] myght in a bath of flambes rede
And as he bad/ myght so was don in dede
For in a bath they gonne hy[s] faste shetten
And myght and day/ great fyr they vndey betten

The longe myght/ and eek a day also
For al the fyr/ and eek the bathes hete
She sat al coold/ and feeled no wo
Ac made hy[s]/ nat a drope for to swete
But in that bath hy[r] lyf she moste lete
For he Almachius/ bet a ful cruel entente
To sleen hy[s] in the bath his conde wente

Thyr stooles in the nette he smoot hym thro
The tormentour/ but for no mannes thanne
he myghte nought smyte/ al hys nekke atte
And for they was that tyme an ordinaunce
That no man/ sholde doon men swich penaunce
The feythe stood to smyten ofte or sooze
This tormentour/ no dorste do nanoore

But half deed/ with hys nekke ytorven there
he lefte hym lye/ and on his wey he went/
The cristen folk/ which that aboute hym seye
With sheetes han the blood fro hym yhent/
Thise sayes hymes sho in this torment/
And neuere cesse/ how the feith to teche
That she hadde fostred/ how sho gan to preche

And how she yaf/ hys moebles and hys thyng/
And to the pope Vrban/ bitook hem tho
And seyde/ I ayes this at heuene kyng/
To han respit· thise sayes and nanno
To recomende to yow/ ey- that I go
Thise soules lo/ and pt I myghte do reyche
Heere of myn hous/ #petuelly a cheyche

Seint Vrban/ with hise dekenes fyue
This body fette/ and buryed it by nyghte
Among hise othere seintes/ honestly
Hys hous the thyrde of seinte Cecile hight to
Seint Vrban hadde it/ as he wel myghte to
In which in to this day in noble wyse
Men doon to Crist· and to his seinte seruyse

Heere is ended the Seconde Nonnes tale

The prologe of the Chanons yemannes tale

Whan toold was al the lyf· of seinte Cecile
Ne we hadde riden fully fyue myle
At Boghton vnder Blee/ vs gan atake
A man/ that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder nethe he hadde a cloppyng
His hakeney/ which pt was al pomely gryys
Do scatte/ that it wondre was to see
It semed/ as he hadde prikked myles thre
The hakeney eek pt his yeman rood vpon
Do scatte that cunnethe myghte it gon

Chanons

A ryale Abbey fooleth vp on his cloper lay
yt semed that he cared lite away
Of light for Money / wod this worthy man
And in myn herte to Bondren I began
What p^t he was / til that I vnderstood
How that his cloke / was sowed to his hood
For cherisch / chan I hadde longe auysed me
I demed hym / oon Chanon for to be
His hat seemg / at his bak / doun by a strap
For he hadde pden / more than tyot / or twaa
He hadde ay prikked lik as he wolde renne
A clote leef / he hadde vnder his hood
For reyn / and for to kepe his heed from heete
But it was ioye / for to seen hym swete
His forheed dropped / as a stillatorie
Ful of plantayne / and of pympernele
And chan that he was come / he gan to crye
God save quod he / this holy compaignye
Fast haue I prikked quod he / for youre sake
Wherfor / that I wolde with yow take
To pden / in oure myrie compaignye
His yeman eek / was ful of curteisye
And seyde ofte / mooch in the more to hyde
Out of youre hostelrie / I caught yow hyde
And warned heer / my lord and my soverayn
Which / to pryden with yow / is ful fayn
For his desport / he loueth daliaunce
Pleeud / for thy warnyng / god yeue thee chaunce
Thanne seyde oure hoost / for certein / it wolde seme
Thy lord were wys / and I may wel deme
He is ful rotounde also / may I seye
Can he ought / telle / a myrie tale or tweye
With which / he glade may this compaignye
Pleo seye my lord / ye / ye certes parten sleye
He kan of mirthe / and eek of Iolitee
Nat but ynough / also ofte thrusteth me
And ye hym knowe / as wel as do I
Ye wolde wonder / how wel and craftily
He coude werke / and that in sondry wise
He hath take on hym / many a grete empryse
Which were ful hard / for any that is heere
To bryngе aboute / but they of hym it leere
As hoomly / as he myt / amonges yow
If ye hym knowe / it wolde be for youre prow
Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntance
For muchel good / I dar leye in balance
Al that I haue / in my possessioun
He is a man / of heigh discrecioun

Came yoke tel he is a passyng man
Tel quod our hoost · I pray thee tel me than
Is he a clerk or noon: telle what he is
Pray he is gretter than a clerk ywis
Seyde this yeman and in wordes fewe
Hoost of his craft sowhat I tel yow sherwe
I seye my lord han wich subtilitee
But al his craft · ye may nat wite for me
And sowhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng
That al this ground on which we been ridyng
Til that we come to Canterbury town
He kowde al clene turne it up so down
And pave it al of silver and of gold
And whan this yeman hadde this tale ytold
Vn to our hoost he seyde benedicitee
This thyng is wondir marvellous to me
Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence
Why cause of which men sholde hym reverence
That of his worship recketh he so lite
His outslop wyf nat worth a myte
As in effect to hym so moot I go
It is al raudy and to tore also
Why is thy lord so sluttissh I the preye
And is of power bettre clooth to weye
If that his dede acordo with thy speche
Telle me that · and that I thee biseche
Why quod this yeman why to axe ye me?
God help me so for he shal nevir thee
But I wol nat awocke that I seye
And they for keep it wers I yow preye
He is to wys in feith as I bileve
That pt is oudoon it wol nat preve
A right as clerkes seyn it is a vice
Wher for in that I holde hym lewed & nyce
For whan a man hath over-greet a wit
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it
So dooth my lord and that me greveth soore
Wos it awreke I kan seye yow na moore
Why of no fors good yeman quod our hoost
Syn of the komyng of thy lord thus woost
Telle how he dooth I pray thee hertely
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly
Where dwelle ye if it be telle he:
In the suburbes of a toun quod he
Lurkyng in hernes and in lanes blynde
Where as thise robbes and thise theves by kynde
Holden hir privee resetful residence
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence

Dixe quod est nimium &c

¶ Chanons ~

So fayen ke / if I shal seye the sothe
¶ Host quod oure hoost / lat me telle to the
Why artow so distoluped of thy face?
¶ Peter quod he / god yeue it harde grace
I am so vsed in the fyr to blowe
That it hath chaunged my colour / I trowe
I am nat knowe / in no compaignye to prie
But specyuke sooth / and leme multiplie
We blondren ede / and pouren in the fir
And for al that / we faille of oure desir
For euere we lakke / of oure conclusion
To multiplie / we doon illusion
And borwe gold / be it a pound or two
Or ten / or twelue / or manye sithes moo
And make hem / weenen at the leeste weye
That of a pound / we koude make tweye
Yet is it fals / but ay we han good hope
It for to doon / and after it we grope
But that science / is so fer vs biforn
We mowen nat / al though we hadden sworn
It ous take / it slit awey so faste
It wole vs maken beggers atte laste
¶ Whil this yeman / was thus in his talkyng
This chanon bigan him nerer to drawe
Which this yeman gan / for ful wel knowe
Of mennes speche / euere hadde this chanon
For Catoun seith / that he that guilty is
Demeth alle thyng / be spoke of hym ywis
That was the cause / he gan so ny him drawe
To his yeman / to heerken al his sawe
And thus he seyde / vn to his yeman tho
Hoold thou thy pees and spek no word mo
For if thou do / thou shalt it deere abye
Thou sclaundrest me / heere in this compaignye
And eek discoverest / that thou sholdest hyde
¶ Nye quod oure hoost / telle on what so bityde
Of al his thretyng / reke nat a myte
¶ Ful wel quod he / nat moore / do nat wyte
¶ And whan this chanon / saugh it wolde nat be
But his yeman / wolde telle his pryuetee
He fleyde awey / for verray sorwe and shame
¶ A quod the yeman / heere shal arise game
Al that I kan / anon now wol I telle
Syn he is goon / the foule feend hym quelle
For neuere heer / wol I with hym meete
For peny ne for pound / I pose bisweete
He that me broghte first vn to that game
Er that he dye / sorwe shal he fynde game

¶ Cato ~

For it is ewest to me by my feith
That feele & wel what that any man seith
And yet for al my owest and al my grief
For al my sorwe labour and meschief
I koude nedo seue it in no wise
Nere wolde god my wit myghte suffise
To tellen al that longeth to that art
And nathelees yoore wol & tellen part
Syn that my lord is goon & wol nat spare
Eech thyng as that & knowe & wol declare

Here endeth the prologe of the Chanons yemannes tale

Here bigynneth the Chanons yeman his tale

With this Chanon & dwelt haue seuen yeer
And of his science am I neuer the neer
Al that I hadde I haue lost therby
And god woot so hath many mo than I
They was wont to be right fressh and gay
Of clothyng and of oothey good array
Now may & seye an hose vp on my heed
And whey my colour was bothe fressh and reed
Now is it wan and of ledene hewe
Who so it seeth soore shal he rewe
And of my swynk yet bleyed is myn eye
Lo which auantage is to multiplie
That slidynge science hath me maad so baar
That I haue no good whey pt ende I faar
And yet I am endetted so therby
Of gold that I haue borwed trewely
That whil I lyue & shal it quite neuere
Lat euery man be ware by me forweye
What maner man that casteth hym ther to
If he continue I holde his thrift ydo
For so help me god ther by shal he nat synne
But empte his purs and make hise chekes thynne
A Chanon he thynketh his wrecchednesse and folye
Hath lost his owene good thurgh his folye
Thanne he exciteth oothey folk ther to
To lesen hir good as he hymself hath do
For vn to shrewes ioye it is and ese
To haue hir felawes in peyne and disese
Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk
Of that no charge & wol speke of oure werk
Whan we been there as we shul exercise
Oure elvysshe craft we semen wonder wise

Solacium miserorum est

Dure termes been so desgral and so queynte
I bloste the fyr til that myn hepte feynte
What sholde I tellen ech proporcion
Of thynges whiche pt bee keche upon
As on fyne or sixe Ounces may wel be
Of eisliey or oon oothey quantitee
And bisye me to telle yow the names
Of oryynent bient benes gren squames
That in to pouste glomiden been ful smal
And in an esthen pot put is al
And salt ypurch and also papeey
Biforn thise pouldres that I steke of seey
And wel ycouer with a lampe of glas
And muchel oothey thyng whiche pt they was
And of the pot and glasses enluryng
That of the eyr myghte passe out no thyng
And of the esy-fyr and smoke also
Which that was vsed and of the caye and so
That he hadden in oure mattres oublyuiyng
And in almaigamyng and calcenyng
And of quyk eisliey yelept ybremne cude
For alle oure sleyghtes he kan nat conclude
Oure oryynent and oublyynes thynne
Oure gromiden litarge eek in the perfume
And ech of thise of Ounces a tentyn
Myght helpeth vs oure labour is in veyn
Me eek oure spryntes ascencion
Me oure mattres pt lyen al fix adoun
Wolde in oure werkyng no thyng ve trouble
For lost is al oure labour and travaille
And al the cost and tweenty deuel kaiy
Is loost also which ke vp on it laiy
Ther is also ful many anothey thyng
That is yn to oure craft aptenyng
Though I by ordre hem nat rehercee kan
Biy cause that I am a lewed man
yet wol I telle hem as they come to mynde
Though I ne kan nat sette hem in hy kynde
As Boole Armoniak verdegrees Boras
And sondry vessels made of erthe and glas
Oure viyriols and oure descensories
Violes crosletz and sublymatories
Cucurbites and Alembikes eek
And othere suche deepe ynough a leek
Mat nedeth it for to rehercee hem alle
Fatnes fubifiyng and wolues galle
Assenyk sal Armoniak and brymstoon
And herbes konde I telle eek many oon

As Egremonye/ valeryan/ and lunarie
And otheye swiche/ if that me liste tarie
Oure lampes bremynge/ bothe nyght and day
To brynge aboute/ oure purpos/ if he may
Oure fourneys eek/ of calcinacion
And of watres albificacion
Oure lectes lym/ chalk/ and gleyre of an ey
Oure shides dryse/ asshes/ donge/ pisse/ and cley
Oure pottes/ sal petre/ vitriole
And dyuerse fyres/ made of wode and cole
Sal tartre alkaly/ and sal preparat
And combust matires and coagulat
Cley made & hors/ and mannes heer/ and oille
Of tartre alum glas/ berme/ wort/ and argolle
Resalgar/ and oure matires enbibynge
And eek of oure matires encorporynge
And of oure watres circulacion
And of oure terme[n]tynge/ and fermentacion
Oure ingottes/ testes/ and many mo
Lo[l] yorke telle/ as was me taught also
The seuene spirites/ and the bodies seuene
By ordre/ as ofte I herde my lord hem neuene
The firste spirit/ quyk siluer calles is
The seconde orpyment/ the thridde yelis
Sal armoniak/ and the ferthe brymstoon
The bodyes seuene eek/ lo hem heere anoon
Lo[l] gold is/ and luna/ siluer we threpe
Wyth hem/ thynke quyk siluer we clepe
Saturnus leed/ and Iupiter is tyn
And Venus coper/ by my fader kyn
This craftes craft who so wole exercise
He shal no good han/ p[ar]tyn may suffise
For al the good he spendeth therabout
He lese shal/ they of haue I no doute
Who that listeth/ outen his folie
Lat hym come forth/ and lerne multiplie
And every man/ that ought hath in his cofre
Lat hym appreve/ and wexe a philosophre
Ayeins that craft is so light to leere
For ray may good noot/ al be he monk or frere
Preest/ or chanon/ or any other wight/
Though he sitte at his book/ bothe day & nyght
In lernynge/ of this elvysshe nyce loore
All is in veyn/ and prayde muchel moore
To lerne a lewed man this subtilte
Fy/ speke nat therof/ for it wol nat be
And konne he letterure/ or konne he noon
As in effect/ he shal fynde it al oon

For bothe two / ÿ wil ÿ saluacion
Conclusion wt multiplicacion
ÿlike wel / whan they han al ÿso
This is to seyn / they fayllen bothe two
Ret forgat / to maken yeshey stulle
Of erbes coroslf / and of lymaille
And of bones mollificacion
And also / of hyr vsurpacion
Oilles / alkalions / and metal fusible
To tellen al / sholde passen any bible
That oughey is / whey fore as for the beste
Of alle thise names / nowe wol I me reste
For as I thorke / I have yow told ynowe
To weyse a fool / al looke he neu so lowe
A nay lat be / the philosophres stoon
Elixer clept. / we seechen faste echoon
For hasse we hym thanne kepe it sikerly ynowe
But vn to vous of heuene / I make avow
For al oure craft / whan we han al ydo
With al oure sleighte / he wol nat come vs to
He hath mas vs spended muchel good
For sothe of which / almoost we weren wood
But that good hope / crepeth in oure herte
Supposynge though we ofte smerte
To be releeued by hym afterwardes
Which supposyng and hope / is swhich a lardes
I wayne yow wel / it is to seken ende
That fulsy tempte / hath mad men blynde
In thilk they of / from al pt ende they wende
yet of that art / they kan nat weyen sadde
For vn to hem / it is a bittre swete
So semeth it / for mad they but a while
Which pt they nyghte chape hem ynne at nyght
And a byt / to walken ynne by day lyght
They wolde hem selle / and spenden on the craft
They kan nat stynte / til no thyng be laft
And eke nowe / where pt ende they goon
Ayen nolay hem knocke / by cruel of hyr woon
For al the wordl / they stynken as a coot
Hyr comony / is so pestilencyous and so hoot
That though a man a mile from hem be
The comony / wole infecte hym thilke me
And thus by cruel / and theeuysshe array
If pt men liste / this folk they knocke may
And if a man / wole aske hem prively
Why they been clothes / so outhisiastily
They nyght anon wol answren in his eye
And seyn / pt if pt they espies kepe

Whan Bolse hem slee / by cause of hir offence
So thus this folk bitrayen innocence
Alle on this go my tale vnto
Wr pt the pot be on the fir ysoo
Of metals with a certein quantitee
My lord hem tempteth and no man but he
Nowe he is goon / nay certein boldely
For as men seyn / he can moon craftily
Algate / Boot Bel he hath a wyf with a name
And yet ful ofte he renneth in a blame
And whit ye how / ful often it happeth so
The pot tobreketh and fareth al is go
Thise metals / been of so greet violence
Oure walles mowe nat make hem resistence
But if they weren wrought of lym and stoon
They pten so and thurgh the wal they goon
And some of hem / synke in to the ground
Thus han we lost by twenty a pound
And some aye scateren al the floor aboute
Some lepte in to the roof with outen doute
Thurgh pt the feend / nought in oure sighte lym semed
I trowe he with vs be / that us awhiled
In helle / where pt he lord is and sire
Nis they moore wo / ne moore yanto[n]e we
Than that oure pot is broke / as I have said
Every man chit and hast hym yvele apaid
Some seyde / it was along on the fir making
Some seyde nay / it was on the blowing
Thanne was I ferd / for that was myn office
Quod the thridde / ye been lewed and nyce
It was nat tempred as it oghte be
Nay quod the fourthe / stynt and herken me
By cause oure fir / ne was nat maad of tree
That is the cause / and oother noon so theech
I kan nat telle / whey on it was along
But wel I woot / greet stuf ne is among
What quod my lord / they is nanoore to doone
Of thise potz / I wol be war eft soone
I am right sikir / that the pot was crased
But as he may / be it no thing amased
As usage is / lat sweep the floor as swithe
Dolukke up youre bestes / and beeth glad & blithe
The ganylok / on an heep / sweped was
And on the floor / ycast a canevas
And al this ganylok / in a syve ythrowe
And ofter / and ypiked many a throwe
Tweye quod oon / som what / of oure metal
Yet is they heep / though pt he han nat al

Chanons

Alle thoughe this thyng myshappe vpon vs alle
Another-tyme it may be wel ynough
Vs moste putte oure good in aventure
A wyschaunt wele may nat ay endure
Trusteth me wel in his prosperitee
Sodenly his good is sprenged in the see
And sodenly comth it ouer vs to the londe
Noght woot my lord the neyxte tyme I shal fonde
To bryngen oure craft al in another-plite
And but I do lat me shan the lyte
They-was defaute in oon whan wel I woot
Another seyde the fyr-was ouer-hoot
And be it hoot or coold I may seye this
That we concluden ydemoore amys
Ne faille of that which pt we sholden have
And in oure wardeyne ydemoore we have
And whan we been togidres euerichoon
Euery man semeth a salomon
But ely thyng which pt semeth as the gold
Nis nat gold as pt I have herd told
Ne euery appul that is fair to eye
Nis nat good what so men clappe or crye
Right so fareth it amonges vs
He pt semeth the wisest by Crist
Is moost fool whan it comth to the preef
And he pt semeth the trewest is a theef
That shul ye knowe ey-pt I sho yow heere
Why that I of my tale have maad an ende

Explicat prima pars. Et sequit pars secunda

Ther was a chanon of religioun
Amonges vs wolde infecte al a toun
Thogh it as greet harm as was Rymyneel
Come Alisaundre Troye and othere three
His sleighte and his infinit falsnesse
Ther kouthe no man writen as I gesse
Thogh pt he lyve myghte a thousande yeer
In al this world of falsshede nas his peer
For in his craftes so he wolde hym wynde
And speke his wordes in so sly a kynde
When he commune shal with any wight
That he wol make hym doten anon right
But it a fiend be as hym semeth is
Ful many a man hath he bigiled ey this
And wole if that he lyve may a while
And yet men ride and goon ful many a myle

Hym for to ese/ and hanoms acqueyntaunce
Rought knokynge/ of his false gouernaunce
And if yow list/ to yeue me audience
I wol it telle heere/ in youre presence
But worshipful chanons religious
Ne deeth nat/ that I deffame youre hous
Al though that myn tale/ of a chanoun bee
Of euery ordre/ som shrewe is yfee
And god forbede/ that al a compaignye
Sholde ysike/ o. singuleer mannes folye
To defame yow/ is no thyng/ myn entente
But to correcten/ that is mys ymente
This tale/ was nat oonly/ toold for yow
But eek for othere moo/ ye woot wel how
That among/ cristes apostles twelue
Ther was no traytour/ but iudas hym selue
Thanne why sholde the penenaunt/ haue a blame
That giltlees ete/ by yow I seye the same
Save oonly this/ if ye wol herkne me
If any iudas/ in youre conuent be
Remeueth hym bitymes/ I yow rede
If shame/ or los/ may causen any drede
And beeth no thyng/ displesed I yow preye
But in this cas/ herketh what I shal seye
At london/ was a preest annueleer
Thatther-inne/ has dwelled many a yeer
Which was so plesaunt/ and so serviseable
Vn to the wyf/ where as he was at table
That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for to paye
For bord ne clothyng/ wente he neer so gaye
And spendyng/ of siluer/ was he nyght ymoore
Ther-of no force/ I wol preche as moore
And telle forthe myn tale/ of the chanon
That broghte this preest to confusion
This false chanon/ cam vpon a day
Vn to this preestes chambre/ where he lay
Bisechynge hym/ to lene hym a certeyn
Of gold/ and he wolde quite it hym ageyn
Lene me a mark/ quod he/ but dayes three
And at myn day/ I wol it quiten thee
And if so be/ that thow me fynde false
Another day/ do hange me by the hals
This preest hym took a mark/ and that as swythe
And this chanon hym thanked ofte sithe
And took his leue/ and wente forth his weye
And at the thridde day/ broghte his moneye
And to the preest/ he took his gold agayn
Wher-of this preest/ was wondre glad and fayn

Certes quod he / no thyng anoyeth me
To lene a man / a noble / or two / or thre
Or that thyng / lene vn my possession
Than he / of wrecche is of condicion
That vn no wise / he breke wole his day
To wrich a man / I kan nevv seye nay
What quod this Chanon / sholde I be wrothe:
Nay / what lene a thyng / yfallen al of newe
Trouthe is a thyng / that I wol evre kepe
Vn to that day / vn which that I shal crepe
Vn to my grave / or ellis god forbede
Wel ivveth this / as lyke-ly as the drede
God thanke I / and vn good tyme / be it sayd
That they- was wrie man yet ywele apayd
For gold ne silver / that he to me lente
Ne wrie falsshede / vn myn herte I wente
And sire quod he / wost of my pryvetee
Syn ye so goodly / han been vn to me
And kithed to me / so gret gentillesse
Somwhat to quyte with youre kyndenesse
I wol youre shrifte / yf that your list to leve
I wol youre tethe / pleynly the wrave
Wost I kan wreken / vn philosophie
Taketh good heede / ye shul wel seen at eye
That I wol doon / a maistrie er I go
Ye quod the preest / ye sey quod he and wol ye so:
Wayne / ther of / I pray your herteli
At youre commandement / sir trewely
Quod the Chanon / and ellis god forbede
Loo wost this theef / koude his craft wel rede
Ful sooth it is / that wrich pres seyde
Wel sitteth / as witnessen this olde leyde
And that ful soone / I wol it wrepe
Vn this Chanon / roote of alle trecherie
That evre more / delit hath and gladnesse
Writhe freendly thoghtes / vn his herte impresse
Wost Cristes people / he may to mesthef bringe
God kepe vs / from his falsse dissymulinge
Wost Wright Criste this preest / et whom pt he delte
Wof his harm tomynge / he no thyng felte
O sely preest / o sely innocent
With coveitise / anon thou shalt be blent
O graceles / ful blynd is thy conceite
Wo thyng / ne aspyed of the deceite
Which that this fox / yshapen hath for thee
His fals crafty grenches / thou ne wayst nat flee
Ther fore to go / to the conclusion
That refereth / to thy confusion

Yeman

Vnhappy man / anon I shal me hye
To tellen thyn vnwit / and his folye
And eek the falsnesse / of that oother Wyfe
As ferforth / as myn konnyng / may strecche
This chanon was my lord / ye wolden seene
Hys hoost / in feith / and by the heavenes queene
It was a nother chanon / and nat hee
That kan an hundred fooldy moore subtilitee
He hath bitrayed folkes many tyme
Of his falsnesse / it sholleth me to lyme
Thus than I speke / of his falsnesse
For shame of hym / my chekes reyen ese
Algates / they bigynnen for to glowe
For rednesse have I noon / right wel I knowe
In my visage / for fumes dulnesse
Of metals / which ye han herd me expresse
Consumed / and wastes han my rednesse
Now take heede / of this chanons cursednesse

Quod he to the preest / lat youre man gon
For quyk silver / that we han it anon
And lat him bringen ounces two or three
And than he comth / as faste shal ye see
A wonder-thyng / which ye ought nevere ey-whar

Quod the preest / it shal be doon ywis
He bad his servant / fetchen hym this thyng
And he al redy / was at his bidding
And went him forth / and cam anon agayn
With this quyk silver / soothly for to sayn
And took thise ounces thre / to the chanoun
And he hem leyde / faire and wel adoun
And bad the servant / coles for to bringe
That he anon / myghte go to his fyre ageyn

The coles / right anon weren yfet
And this chanon / took out a crosselet
Of his bosom / and shewed it to the preest
This instrument quod he / which pat thou seest
Take in thyn hand / and put thy self therinne
Of this quyk silver an ounce / and hem bigynne
In name of Crist / to werke a philosofre
They ben ful fewe / to whiche I wolde profre
To shewen hem / this myne of my science
For ye shul seen / hem by experience
That this quyk silver / wol I mortifye
Right in youre sighte anon / I wol nat lye
And make as good silver / and as fyn
As ther is any / in youre purs or myn
Or elleswhere / and make it malliable
And elles / holdeth me / fals and vnable

Chanons ...

Amonges folk/ for ese to appese
I haue a poudre heer/ pt coste me Reese
Shal make al good/ for it is cause of al
myn kouninge/ Which pt I to yow shewen shal
Voyde youre man/ and lat him be they oute
And shette the doze/ Whil we been aboute
Oure pryuetee/ that no man vs espie
Whils that we reyke/ in this philosophie
Al as he bad/ fulfilled was in dede
This ilke Chanon/ anon right/ out yede
And his maister/ shette the doze anon
And to his labour/ spedily they gon
This preest/ at this cursed Chanons biddynge/
Upon the fir/ anon sette this thynge/
And blew the fir/ and bisyed him ful faste
And this Chanon/ in to the crosselet caste
A poudre noot I Wher of/ that it was
I nam/ outher of chalk/ or of glas
Or som what elles/ was nat worth a flye
To blynde With the preest/ and bad him hye
The coles/ for to wrichen al aboue
The crosselet/ for in tokenynge/ I thee loue
Quod this Chanon/ thyne owene handes two
Shul werche al thynge/ Which shal heer be do
Graunt mercy quod the preest/ and was ful glad/
And wriched wole/ as that Chanon bad/
And Whil he busy was/ this feendly werche
This false Chanon/ the foule feend him ferche
Out of his barm/ he took/ a Wexen cole
In Which ful subtilly/ was maad an hole
And they nanne/ put was of siluer lemaille
An ounce/ and stopped was Wt outen faille
This hole Wt Wex/ to kepe the lemaille In
And Wnderstonden/ that this falsse gyn
Was nat maad they/ but it was maad bifore
And othere thynges/ I shal tellen moore
Her afterward/ Whithe pt he Wt him broghte
Er he cam there/ him to bigile he thoghte
And so he dide/ er pt they Wente at Wynne
Til he has temed him/ he konde nat blynne
It sulleth me/ Whan that I of him speke
On his falsshede/ fayn Wolde I me Wreke
If I Wiste how/ but he is heere and there
He is so Wariant/ pt he abit no Where
But taketh heede/ now lyes for goddes loue
He took this cole/ of Which I spak aboue
And in his hand/ he baar it pryuely
And Whil the preest/ couches busily

The coles as I tolde yowe er this
This chanon seyde freend ye doon amys
This is nat counthes as it oghte be
But soone I shal amenden it quod he
Nowe let me medle therwith but a while
ffor of yowe have I pitee by seint Gile
ye been ayght hoot ⁊ of colde yowe adrete
Have heere a clooth and wipe awey the swete
And while p^t the preest wipes his face
This chanon took his cole et shook gret
And leyde it above upon the myddeward
Of the crosselet and blew wel afterward
Til that the coles gonne faste brenne
Nowe yeve us drynke quod the chanon thenne
As blithe al shal be wel I undertake
Sitte we doun and let us myrie make
And whan p^t this chanoun sothen cole
Was brent al the lemaille out of the hole
Into the crosselet fil anon adoun
And so it moste needes by resoun
Syn it so evene above it touched was
But ther of wiste the preest no thyng alas
he demed alle the coles yliche good
ffor of that sleighte he no thyng understood
And whan this alkamystre saugh his tyme
Sire up quod he up preest and sit by me
And for I coot wel ingot have I noon
Cooth walketh forth and bryng me a chalk stoon
ffor I wol make oon of the same shap
That is an ingot if I may han hap
And bryngeth eek et yowe a bolle or a panne
fful of water and ye shul se wel thanne
how p^t oure bisynesse shal thryve ⁊ preeve
And yet for ye shul han no mysbileeve
Ne wrong conceite of me in youre absence
I wol nat been out of youre presence
But go with yowe and come et yowe ageyn
The chambre dore shortly for to seyn
They openen and shette and wente hir weye
And forth with hem they carieden the keye
And comen again et outen any delay
What sholde I tarien al the longe day
he took the chalk and shoop it in the wise
Of an ingot as I shal yowe devyse
A keye he took out of his owene sleeve
A teyne of silver ywis moot he preeve
Which p^t was nat but an ounce of weighte
And taak heede now of his swifte sleighte

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The choop his ingot in lengthe and eek in breede
Of this teyne / Withouten any drede
So slyly / that the preest it nat espide
And in his sleeue / agayn he gan it hide
And fro the fy / he took vp his mateise
And in thyngot / putte it & myne cheese
And in the latey vessel / he it caste
Than pt hym liste / and bad the preest as faste
That pt heey is / put in thyn hand and gloue
Thow shalt they siluey as I hope
He putte his hand in / and took vp a teyne
Of siluey fyn / and glad in euery deyne
Was this preest. Than he raught it was so
Gosses blessyng / and his moodres also
And alle halwes / haue ye cip chanon
Seyde this preest. and I. hir malison
But and ye vouche sauf to techen me
This noble craft / and this subtiltee
I shal be youre / in al that euere I may
Quod the preest / yet shal I make assay
The seconde tyme / pt ye may taken heede
And been expt of this / and in youre neede
Anothey day / assaye in myn absente
This disciplyne / and this clergy sheene
Lat take anothey ounce / quod he tho
Of quyk siluey / Withouten wordes mo
And do they With / as ye han don er this
With that oothey / shith pt nose siluey is
This preest hym bisieth / in al pt he kan
To doon / as this chanon / this cursed man
Commaunded hym / and faste he blew the fir
ffor to oune / to theffect of his desir
And this chanon / right in the meene while
Al redy was / the preest eft to bigile
And for a countenance / in his hand he bar
An holwe stikke / taat kepe and be war
In the ende of Which / an ounce and namoore
Of siluey lemaille / put was as biforе
In his told / and stopped pt key weel
ffor to kepe in / his lemailles euery deel
And Whil this preest / was in his bisyneese
This chanon / With his stikke gan hym dresse
To hym anon / and his poudre caste in
As he dide er / the deuel / out of his skin
hym terte / I pray to god / for his falsheede
ffor he was euere fals / in thoght & deede
And With this stikke / aboue the crosselet
That was ordeyned With that false set

Tyeuian ~

He stiyes the coles, til relente gan
The key again the fyr as cliy ueau
But it a fool be, coot wel it woot neke
And al that in the stikke was out yese
And in the crosselet hastily it fel
Mock good oyes estat wol ye let them wel
Chau pt this preest. thus was bigiled ageyn
Supposynge noght but treuthe sooth to seyn
He was so glad that he kan nat expresse
In no maneye his myythe and his gladnesse
And to the Chanon he pfred eft soone
Body and good, ye quod the chanon soone
Though poure I be, craftiy thou shalt me fynde
I warne thee, yet is they moore bisynde
Is they any copey her inne seyde he:
Ye quod the preest oye I trowe wel they be
Welle go bye vs oom and that as swithe
Mock good oye go forth thy wey and hy the
The leute his wey and with the copey cam
And this chanon it in his handes nam
And of that copey weyes out but an ounce
Al to symple is my touge to pronunce
As ywisse ye of my wit the doublenesse
Of this chanon, foote of alle cursednesse
He semed freendly to hem pt knewe hym noght
But he was feendly, both in hepte and thoght
It seemeth me, to telle of his falsnesse
But natheles yet wol I it expresse
To thentente that men may be war therby
And for noon other cause trewely
He putte the ounce of copey in the crosselet
And on the fyr as swithe he hath it set
And caste in pouder and made the preest to bloo
And in his werkyng for to stoupe lowe
As he bisey and al nas but a japе
Right as hym liste the preest he made his ape
And after cast in the pingot he it caste
And in the paume putte it at the laste
Of the water in he putte his owene hand
And in his clene as ye bifore han hand
Heyde me telle, hadde a siluer teyne
He slyly took it out this cursed heyne
Unwityng this preest of his false craft
And in the pannes bothe he hath it laft
And in the water rombled to and fro
And certes pryuely took up also
The copey teyne noght knowynge this preest
And hidde it and hym self bye the heest

And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game
Stompeth aboun by god ye be to blame
Helpeth me nowe as I bide yow Chilcey
Putte in youre hand and loketh what is there
This preest took kep this silver tejne anon
And thanne seyde the Chanon lat vs gon
Et thise thre tejnes whiche pt we han wroght
To oun goldsmyth and wite if they been oght
For by my feith I nolde for myn good
But if that they were silver fyn and good
And that as writhe preeued it shal be
Anon to the goldsmyth wt thise tejnes thre
They wente and putte thise tejnes in assay
To fyr and hand myghte no man seye nay
But pt they weren as hem oghte be
This cottes preest was gladder than he
Was neuer bird gladder agayn the day
Ne nyghtyngale in the seson of may
Was neuer man that luste bet to synge
Ne lady lustier in carolynge
Or for to speke of loue and cowardise
Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy emprise
To stonden in grace of his lady deere
Than hadde this preest this sorcy craft to leere
And to the Chanon thus he spak and seyde
For loue of god that for vs alle deyde
And as I may deserue it on to yow
What shal this receite coste telleth now
By myne lady quod this Chanon it is deere
I warne yow wel for saue I and a feere
In Engelond they kan no man it make
Nay sire quod he nowe sey for goddes sake
What shal I paye telleth me I preye
Nay nay quod he it is ful deere I seye
Sire at o word if that thee list it haue
ye shul paye fourty pound so god me saue
And nere the freendshipe pt ye doon vs this
To me ye sholde paye more y wis
This preest the somme of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fette and took hem euerichon
To this Chanon for this ilke receit
Al his werkyng was but fraude and deceit
Sir preest he seyde I kepe han no loos
Of myn craft for I wolde it kept were cloos
And as ye loue me kepeth it derne
For and men knewen al my soutilte
By god they wolden han me greet envye
To me by cause of myn philosophye

Tyrannus

Sholde he seen they were noon oothey weye
Gos it forbeede quod the preest what sey ye
yet hasse I leue spenden al the good
Which pt I haue/ or elles weye I good
Than that ye sholden falle in swich meschief
ffor youre good Wyl owe haue ye nyght good preef
Quod the Chanon and fayrkel gradut nadey
he wente his wey and neid the preest hym sy
after that say and whan pt this preest sholde
Waken assay at swich tyme as he wolde
Of this yeerit fayrkel it wolde nat be
so thus bysiked and bigiled was he
Thus maketh he his intoduccion
To bryngе folk to destruccion
Consideretb owes holy pt in eth estaat
Bitweye men and god ther is debaat
So fersforth that vunethe is ther noon
This multiplying blent so many oon
That in good feith I thynke pt it dee
Be cause gretteste of swich scarsetee
Philosophres spoken so mystily
In this craft pt men kan nat come therby
ffor any wit pt men kan make adayes
They wolde wel chiteyen as pt doon foyes
And in hir termes sette hir lust and peyne
But to hir purpos shul they nedle atteyne
A man may lightly lerne if he haue aught
To multiplie and bryngе his good to naught
Swich a lucre is in this lusty game
A mannes mynde it fully turne vnto grame
And empten also gret and heuye purses
And maken folk for to purchacen curses
Of hem pt shan hir good they to yelde
ffy for shame they pt shan been bleent
Allas kan they nat flee the fyres heete
ye that it use I rede ye it leete
Lest ye lese al for bet than nedle is lette
Reweye to thryue longe to long a date
Though ye preelle ay ye shul it nedle fynde
ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde
That blondreth forth and pit castreth noon
he is as boold to renne agayn a stoon
As for to goon/ bisides in this weye
So faren ye that multiplie I seye
If pt youre eyen kan nat seen aright
Looke pt youre mynde lakke nogbt his sight
ffor though ye looken neid so brode and staye
ye shul no thyng Cunne on that thaffaye

Chanons

But Waste al that ye may yape and yenne
Withsaketh the fyr left it to faste brenne
wesleth nanooze With that ast I mene
ffor if ye doon youre thyft is goon ful clene
And right as Keithe Sol yolk tellen sheep
What yt the philosophres seyn in this matteere
Thus seith Arnold of the newe toun
As his Rosaye maketh mencioun
he seith right thus With outen any lye
They may no man vntuye mortifie
But it be With his brother knoweleching
hoom yt he Which yt first seyde this thyng
Of philosophres fadre first Was hermes
he seith hoom yt the dragon doutelees
ne dyeth nat but if that he be slayn
With his brother And that is for to sayn
By the dragon Mercurie and noon oothre
he vnderstood And By tymestoon by his brother
That out of Sol And Luna were ydrawe
And therfore seyde he taak heede to my sawe
Let no man bisye hym this art for to lerne
But if yt he the entencion and speche
Of philosophres vnderstonde kan
And if he do he is a lewed man
ffor this science And this konnyng quod he
Is of the secree of the secretes pree
Also they Was a disciple of plato
That on a tyme seyde his maistre to
As his book seith Sol bere Witnesse
And this Was his demande in soothfastnesse
Telle me the name of the prec stoon
And plato answerde vn to hym anoon
Take the stoon that Titanos men name
Which is that quod he? Magnasia is the same
Seyde plato ye sire And is it thus?
This is ignotum p ignotius
What is Magnasia good sire I yow preye?
It is a Water that is maad I seye
Of elementes foure quod plato
Telle me the roote good sire quod he tho
Of that Water if it be youre Wille
Nay may quod plato certein that I nylle
The philosophres Wern Were ful yshoon
That they sholde discovere it vn to noon
Ne in no book it Write in no manere
ffor vn to Crist it is so lief And deere
That he Sol nat that it Discovere bee
But Where it liketh to his Deitee

when for tenspise and eek for to defende
Whom pt hym liketh lo this is the ende
Thanne coutluse thus with pt gos of heuene
The Cil mat that the philosophres neuene
Hoch pt a man shal come vn to this stoon
Lese vs for the beste lete it goon
ffor who so maketh gos his assaye
As for to seyken any thyng vn couthe
Of his Cil restes neuer shal he thryue
Thogh that he multiplie terme of lyue
And theye a poynt for endes is my tale
Gos sende euery trewe man boote of his bale Amen

Heere endes the Chanons yemannes tale

Heere folweth the prologe of the Maunciples tale

Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun
Which pt ye clepen Bobbeup and doun
Duse the clee in Caunterbury weye
They gan ourc hoost for to japen and pleye
And seyde sires what Dun is in the myre
Is there no man for preyere ne for hyre
That holp a cake ourc felawe al bisyde
A theef myghte hym ful lightly robbe and bynde
See how he nappeth see how for cokkes bones
That he wol falle fro his hors atones
Is that a Cook of london with meschaunce
Do hym come forth he knoweth his penaunce
ffor he shal telle a tale by my fey
Al though it be nat worth a botel hey
Awake thou Cook quod he god yeue thee sorwe
What eyleth thee to slepe by the morwe
Hastow nas fleen al myght or artow dronke
Or hastow with sum quene al myght yswonke
So that thow mayst nat holden up thyn heed
This Cook pt was ful pale and no thyng reed
Seyde to ourc hoost so god my soule blesse
As there is falle on me a litel harmesse
Woot I nat why pt me wil slepe
Than the beste galon wyn in shepe
Wel quod the maunciple if it may doon ese
To thee sire Cook and to no wight displese
Which pt heere vseth vn this compaignye
And that ourc hoost wole of his curteisye
I wol nowt excuse thee of thy tale
ffor vn good feith thy vysage is ful pale

Manciple

Thyne eyen daseen eek as that mo thynketh
And eek thy hoot thy breeth ful soure stynketh
That sheweth eek thou art nat eek disposed
Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been yglosed
See how he gaineth lo this dronken wight
As though he wolde with us anon fight
Hold elles thy mouth man by thy fader kyn
The devel of helle sette his foot therin
Thy cursed breeth infecte wolde us alle
Fy stynkyng swyn fy foule mote thee falle
A taketh heede sires of this lusty man
How soote he snoreth lo how he pufleth atte ffan
Ther to mo thynketh ye been eek yshape
I trowe that ye dronken han wyn ape
And that is whan men pleyen with a straw
And with this speche the cook wax wroth and gnaw
And on the manciple he gan nodde faste
For lakke of speche and down the hoxe hym caste
Where as he lay til pt men up hym took
This was a fair chyvachee of a cook
Allas he nadde holde hym by his hadel
And ey pt he agayn couped un his sadel
Ther was greet showyng bothe to and fro
Er he were corven out of his harneys two
And longe er he up gat and muchel care and wo
So dronkelewe was this cokys passed goost
And to the manciple thanne spak our hoost
Thy cause dronke hath dominacion
Upon this man by my salvacion
I trowe he loste his wit also to telle his tale
For here it ryn or cold or moyste ale
That he hath dronke he spetteth in his hose
And snesseth fast and eek he hath the pose
He hath also to do more than ynough
To kepen hym and his capul out of slough
And if he falle from his capul eft soone
Thanne shal we alle have ynogh to doone
In liftyng up his heuy dronken cors
Telle on thy tale of hym make I no fors
But yet manciple in feith thou art to nyce
Thus openly repreeue hym of his vice
Another day he wole paraventure
Reclayme thee and bringe thee to lure
I noote he spak wole of swiche thynges
Ne force to pynchen at thy rekenynges
That touche me nat nor sholde trewely
Now quod the manciple that hereof am I
Ful wel by Inne and by cause eek I preye
That of no wight thou recche what I seye
And for I am a manciple I am a lewed man
But yet me lyketh of the lawe a pan
Conceyve thou the lawe and the statutes take
Ful many oon been writen for the sake
Of commune profit which that han ben kept
And elles certes hadden been ful slept
The statute of the lyon wel thou wost
Thou shalt nat make him wrooth for sauf thy lyf
Ne make a mowe upon a man ne stryf
With no man for many a mannes hap
And many oon hurt al longe of a lap
Of janglyng and eek of chyvachee
Ful ofte tyme myghte han been ful free
A wyf wol laughe whan hir housbonde weepe
And som folk wol han al the reule or keepe
And som folk moste been taught by assay
For ones that can nat wol nat other day
And som folk preyse wisdom but certeyn
But if a man hir conning wolde fayn
He muste nat discovere it out of the place
Whan that he shal another man manace
Forthy me lyketh evermo bet
To been a lewed man and kepe me fro shame
Than for to have conning of a blame
And eek me lyketh wel to be hid
Ful many a man wolde I nat chyde
For every word men holden him a fool
Ful many a fool passeth for his conning
And for he can nat hold his tonge in yvel
Ne can nat speke wel and to purpos
Now sire and eft sire so wil it falle
Forgeve me al my trespas for I yow calle
But for the love of god stynt your ire
And therwithal he caste his eyen shire
And at the cook gan laughe right of scorn
And seyde sire hoste and ye be nat yshorn
Have I nat reson for to speke right
Thou spekest lyk a janglyng manciple
Tel forth thy tale and of his threte roghte nought
For whan he is out of his dronkenesse
His wyf shal have a part of his gladnesse
Or elles other folk han wel the game
Anon he bad his tale forth to pace
Lo heere bigynneth the manciples tale
Of colyn and of bayard
Wher dwelled whilom a compaignye
Of yonge folk that haunted folye
As hasardrye stywes and tavernes
Wher as with harpes lutes and gyternes
They daunce and pleye at dees both day and nyght
And eten also and drinken over hir myght
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifise
Within that develes temple in cursed wise
By superfluite abhominable
Hir othes been so grete and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere
Our blessed lordes body they to-tere
Hem thoughte that jewes rente him nat enough
And ech of hem at other caste a leek
They pleyen at the ches and riche and pore
And at the taverne in the apparence
Ther is the lyf of many a wrecched wight
Er that the first cok crowe anon right
Ther is the first original cause and reed
That maketh folk to synge weylawey
For whan the galon is in his braynes warm
His hand out of his purs ful lyte can warm
Now wol I stynte of gamesters to speke
Which evermo pursuen vice eke
But god forbede but men shal somtyme pleye
Or elles men moste nedes dye or deye
For sikerly the spirit wol nat suffise
The flesh must have his refeccioun
Pitaunce or his somtyme or his visitacioun
This is to seye som honest recreacioun
Which that no drasty man may yvel chalenge
For honest thyng is sothly for to seye
Now this proposed I shal yow nat lye
Two of these folk ye han herd me devyse
That sworen oon his herte blood and nayles
And eek his body dayntily to assayles
That oon of hem was cleped hight colyn
A carpenter of good reputacioun
A trewe wight and eek a man of fame
His hoste he knew by cristen name
But that is out of my mateere
Forth wol I my tale hem tweye pursue
Colyn hath laboured al the longe day
And hath ful wel ybroght abedde his hay
His mangers full his stalles eek with stree
His hors eten hath and is in quiete
Now wol I speke of bayard and of colyn
How they lyven in ydelnesse and folye
Up rysen colyn erly on a day
And bayard knew his felawes wil ful wel
And to the tavernes forth they gon apace
Ther is the cheef and principal dwellyng
Of al the vanitee and of the pestilence
Ther they been wont hir sovereyn lyf to spende
Ther they been wont hir sovereyn lyf to spende
Ther comen they as it were to hir hostelrye
Ther is my dame and my maistresse
Ther is the deel of helle and al his power
Ther is the place ther as the feendes dwelle
Ful many a citezein have I founden there
Now god save al this compaignye fere and lere
Thus sayde I wel I trowe I shal nat lye
Now sire and eft sire so wil it falle
Forgeve me al my trespas for I yow calle
But for the love of god stynt your ire
And therwithal he caste his eyen shire
And at the cook gan laughe right of scorn
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Ther is the place ther as the feendes dwelle
Ful many a citezein have I founden there
Now god save al this compaignye fere and lere

Which that he nt on / that he sholde with me stryue
¶ Col nat flatthen hym / also moot ¶ thryue
That / that ¶ speke / ¶ seyde it ũ myn bouse
And fire ye that / ¶ haue seen ũ a gouse
A straghte of hym / ye of a nye grape
And right anon / ye shul seen a good jape
This cook shal drynke ther of / if y^t ¶ may
Yp peyne of deeth / he col nat seye me nay
¶ And certeynly / to telle as it was
Of this vessel / the cook dronk faste / alas
That neuer hym / he dronk ynough tofore
And whan he hadde / poupes ũ this hore
To the maunciple / he took the gouse ageyn
And of that drynke / the cook was wondre fayn
And thankes hym / ũ swich wise as he koude
¶ Thanne gan our hoost / to laughen wondre loude
And seyde / ¶ se wel / it is necessarie
Wher y^t he goon / y^t drynke he ert ye tarie
For that col tymo / pandour and bybbe
Iacob and lous / and many a strong apese
O Bacus / yblessed be thy name
That so kanst turnen / ernest ũ to game
Worship and thank / be to thy deitee
Of that mateere / ye gete ũ moore of me
Telle on thy tale / maunciple ¶ thee preye
Wel sire quod he / now herkneth what ¶ seye

¶ Here bigynneth the maunciples tale of the Cooke

Whan phebus / dwelled heere in this erthe adoun
As olde bookes / maken mencioun
He was the mooste lusty bachiler
In al this world / and eek the beste archer
He slow pithon / the serpent as he lay
Slepynge / agayn the sonne vpon a day
And many another / noble worthy deed
He with his bowe wroghte as men may reed
Deseyen he koude / on every instrumente
And synge / that it was a melodie
Ye heeren / of his cheeste voys the soun
Ceyx / the kyng / of Thebes Amphioun
That with his syngyng / walled that citee
Koude nevle synge / half so wel as hee
Thurie to he was / the conenyeste man
That is or was / sith y^t the world bigan
That nedeth it / his fetures to destryue
For in this world / was noon so fair on lyue

He was they with fulfild of gentillesse
Of honour and of pfit forthynesse
This phebus that was flour of bachilrie
As wel in fredom as in chyualrie
ffor his desport. in signe eek of victorie
Of python so as telleth vs the storie
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe
The nolk hadde this phebus in his hous a crowe
Which in a cage he fostred many a day
And taughte it speke as men teche a jay
Whit was this crowe as a snow whit swan
And countrefete the speche of every man
He coude whan he sholde telle a tale
Therwith in al this world no nightyngale
Ne coude by an hondred thousandfold deel
Synge in bewdely and weel
The nolk hadde this phebus in his hous a wyf
Which pt he loued more than his lyf
And night and day dide ever his diligence
Hir for to plese and doon hir reuerence
Save oonly the sothe that I shal seyn
Jalous he was and wolde have kept hir feyn
ffor hir eyen sooth hir japes for to be
And so is every wight in swich degree
But al in ydel for it auailleth noght
A good wyf that is clene of werk & thoght
Sholde nat been kept in noon ahayt certayn
This trewely the labour is in vayn
To kepe a shrewe for it wol nat bee
This holde I for a verray nycetee
To spille labour for to kepe kynes
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lynes
But nolde to purpos as I first bigan
This worthy phebus dooth al that he kan
To plesen hir wenynge that swich plesance
And for his manhede and his gentillesse
That no man sholde han put hym from his fee
But god it woot they may no man constreine
As to destreyne a thyng. which pt nature
Hath natureelly set in a creature
Take any brid and put it in a cage
And do al thyn entente and thy corage
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees pt thou kanst bithynke
And keep it alwo cleenly as thou may
Al though his cage of gold be neuer so gay
yet hath this brid by twenty thousand foold
Lefe in a forest that is free and cold

Exemplum de volucre

¶ Exemplum ... de ayuelego ...

¶ Exemplum ... de lupo ...

¶ Exemplum ...

Soon ete Eozunes and Eich Sleccheduesse
ffor ede this bird Sol soon his bisyuesse
Do estape out of his Cage if she may
his libertee this bird desireth ay
¶ Sat take a Cat and fostre hym Sel Et milk
And terdre flesshy and make his couche of silk
And lat hym seen a mous go by the Sal
Anon he Seyneth milk and flesshy and al
And eueryy Seynte that is in that hous
Eich appetit he hath to ete a mous
So Seeye hath lust his dominacion
And appetit fleeneth discrecion
¶ A she Colf hath also a vilenus Syne
Dhe leckedeste Colf pt she may Fynde
Or leest of reputacion that Sol she take
In tyme Dhan hy lust to han a make
¶ Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men
Dhat been wytteke ans no thyng by Somen
ffor men han ede a likerous appetit
On lokey thyng to pfoupne hyr desit
Dhan on hyr Eynes be they neu so faye
Ne neu so tricke ne so debonaye
Messy is so neckefangel Eith mesdaunce
Dhat Se ne konne in no thyng han plesaunce
Dhat Sedneth ni to veytu any Dhide
¶ Dhis Polebus Dhich pt thoghte upon no gile
Deceynes Das for al his Solitee
ffor Cudey hym anothey hadde shee
A man of litel reputacion
Dat Coyth to Phebus in coyanson
Dhe moore hayn is it happeth ofte so
Of Dhich they conneth muchel hayn & Co
¶ And so bifel Dhan Phebus Das absent
his Eyf anon hath for hy lemman sent
hy lemman Edes this is a Cnauysshe speche
ffor yeueth it me and that I yow biseche
¶ Dhe wise Plato seith as ye may yese
Dhe Coyd moot nede accorde Eith the dese
If men shal telle ppely a thyng
Dhe Coyd moot soyn be to the Seyknyng
I am a boystous man right thus seye I
Dhey nys no differeuce tricchely
Bitwixe a Eyf pt is of heigh degree
If of hy body dishoneste she be
And a poure Cenicke / oothey than this
If it so be they Seyke bothe amys
But pt the gentile in hyr estaat abone
She shal be cleped his lady as in soue

Manciple

Thus for that oothey is a poure Yeoman
She shal be cleped his Wenche or his Leman
And god it Woot myn owene deere brother
Men seyn pt oon as lorde as lith pt oothey
Right so bitwixe a titlelees tyraunt
And an Outlawe or a theef expaunt
The same I seye they is no difference
To alisaundre was toold this sentence
That for the tyraunt is of grettey myght
By force of meynee for to sleen down right
And brennen hous & hoom & make al playn
So they-fore is he cleped a Capitayn
And for the Outlawe hath but smal meynee
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he
Ne bringe a contree to so greet meschief
Men clepen him an Outlawe or a theef
But for I am a man nought textueel
I Wol nought telle of textes neuer a deel
I Wol go to my tale as I bigan
Whan Phebus Wyf had sent for hir leman
Anon they Woghten al hir lust volage
The White crowe that heeng ay in the Cage
Biseeld hir Werk and seyde ner a Word
And Whan pt hoom was comen Phebus the lord
This Crowe sang Cokkow Cokkow Cokkow
What bryd quod Phebus What song synge stow
Ne Were thow wont so myrily to synge
That to myn herte it Was a ioye synge
To heere thy voys allas What song is this
By god quod he I synge nat amys
Phebus quod he for al thy Worthynesse
For al thy beautee and thy gentilesse
For al thy song and thy mynstralcye
For al thy Wantynge bleres is thyn eye
Withoon of litel reputacion
Nought Worth to thee in comparison
The mountance of a gnat so moote I thryue
For on thy bed thy Wyf I Wough hym Wyve
Quo nimium quid
What Wol ye moore the Crowe anon hym tolde
By Wise tokenes and by Wordes bolde
How pt his Wyf had doon hir lecherye
Hym to greet shame and to greet vilenye
And tolde hym ofte he Wough it Wt his eyen
This Phebus gan abreyd for to seyen
And thoughte his sorweful herte brast atTwo
His bouke he bente and sette the arwe a flo
And in his ire his Wyf thanne hath he slayn
This is theffect and thus I nam moore to sayn

The Manciple

For cookes of thise he bare his mynstralcie
Wothe sauce and sirte and pyement and mustarde
And eek he bare his axtres and his bowe
And after that thus spak he to the cooke
I pray thee quod he with tonge of stoxpion
Thou hast me broght to my confusion
Allas that I was broght thy nece I deed
O deere syst o gemme of lustiheed
That deye to me so bad and eek so yerne
Mooste lustow deed at fote pale of herne
Ful guiltees that dyste I shoke yow
O rakel hand to doon so foule a duyn
O trouble wit o ire recchelees
That unavised ruyneth guiltees
O dronkenesse ful of fals suspecion
Where was thy wit and thy discrecion
O every man be war of rakelnesse
Ne trouwe no thing ne out reu strong witnesse
But preve it to the soule er pt ye geten yvel
And bewar also to whom ye tellen youre counsel
For ye doon any extorcion
Upon youre neighebour for suspecion
Allas a thousand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordoon and brought hem in the mire
Allas for wrathe I wot my selven shame
And to the cooke o false theef seyde he
I wol thee quite anon thy false game
Thou songe whilom lyk a nightingale
Mooste shaltow false theef thy song forgon
And eek thy white fetheres everichon
Ne never in al thy lif ne shaltou speke
But evermore agayn tempest and rayn
In tokenynge pt thurgh thee my wyf is slayn
And to the cooke he stirte and that anon
And pulled hise white fetheres everichon
And made him blak and refte him al his song
And eek his speche and out at doore him slong
Unto the devel which I him betake
And for this cause been alle cookes blake
Lordynges by this ensample I yow preye
Beth war and taketh kepe what I seye
Ne telleth never no man my youre lyf
Nooth pt another man hath dight his wyf
He wol yow hate mortally certeyn
Daun Salomon as wise clerkes seyn

The Manciples

Wel sheth a man / to kepen his tonge wel
But as I seyde / I am noght textueel
But nathelees / thus taughte me my dame
my sone / thenk / on the Ooke on godes name
my sone / keep wel thy tonge & keep thy freend /
A wikked tonge / is worse than a feend /
my sone / from a feend / men may hem wesse
my sone / god of his endelees goodnesse
walled a tonge / & teeth & lippes eke
for man sholde hym avyse / what he speeke
my sone / ful ofte / for to muche speche
hath many a man been spilt / as clerkes teche
But for litel speche / avysely
Is no man sheuld / to speke gendally
my sone / thy tonge sholdestow restreyne
At alle tymes / but whan thou doost thy peyne
To speke of god / in honour and preyere
The firste vertu sone / if thou wolt leere
Is to restreyne / and kepe wel thy tonge
Thus lerne children / whan pt they been yonge
my sone / of muchel speking / yvele avyses
They lasse speking / hadde ynough suffises
Couth muchel harm / thus was me toold & taught /
In muchel speche / synne wanteth naught /
Wostow wel / whey of a payl tonge semeth
Right as a sheeld / forbutteth and forkerueth
An harm atte / my deere sone right so
A tonge / kitteth freendshipe al atte
A jangleer / is to god abhominable
Reed Salomon / so wys and honurable
Reed Dauid in his psalmes / reed ovydie
my sone spek nat / but pt thyn need thou bidde
Dissimule as thou were deef / if that thou seeye
A jangleer / speke of vylous mateere
Ne reporte / eek of tidynges / ne lerne it of thee leste
That litel jangleer / causeth muchel reste
my sone / if thou no wikked word hast seyd /
Thee thar nat drede / for to be biwreyed /
But he pt hath myssayd / I day wel sayn
he may by no wey / clepe his word ageyn
Thyng that is seyd is seyd / and forth it gooth
Though syre repente / or be hym leef / or looth
He is his thral / to whom pt he hath sayd /
A tale / of which he is now yvele apayd /
my sone be war / and be noon auctour newe
Of tidynges / whether they been false or trewe
Where so thou come / amonges hye or lowe
Kepe wel thy tonge / and thenk vpon the Ooke

Heere endeth the manciples tale of the Ooke

Here folweth the prologe of the persons tale

By that the vyncyple hadde his tale al ended
The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe that he nas nat to my sighte
Degrees nyne and twenty as in sighte
Ten of the clokke it was tho as I gesse
For elleven foot or litel moore or lesse
My shadwe was at thilke tyme as thenne
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted hadde
In sixe feet equal of proporcion
Thenne with the wymmes exaltacion
I meene libra alwey gan ascende
As we clymben upryght at a degree
For which cause as we were come to gyde
As in this caas oure joly compaignye
Deyde in this wise lordynges everichoon
Nought lakketh us no tales moo than oon
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce
I pray to god so yeve hym right good chaunce
That telleth this tale to us lustily
Sire preest quod he artow a vicary
Or a parson / sey sooth by thy fey
Be what thou be / ne breke thou nat oure pley
For every man save thou / hath told his tale
Untherfore and herke us what is in thy male
For trewely me thynketh by thy cheere
Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet matere
Telle us a fable anon for cokkes bones
This preest answerde al atones
Thou getest fable noon ytoold for me
For Paul that writeth unto Thymothee
Reproveth hem that weyven soothfastnesse
And tellen fables and swiche wrecchednesse
Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest
Whan I may sowen whete if I nil nat lest
For which I seye if that yow list to heere
Moralitee and vertuous matere
And thanne / I wol yeve my audience
I wol fayn at cristes reverence
Do yow plesance leeful as I kan
But trusteth wel I am a Southren man
I kan nat geeste rum ram ruf by lettre
Ne god woot rym holde I but litel bettre
And therfore yf yow list I wol nat glose
I wol yow telle a rym in prose
To knytte up al this feeste and make an ende
And Jhesu for his grace wit me sende

Paulus ad Thimotheum ...

To shelde yow the beyȝ in this viage
Of thilke ȝfit glorious pilgrymage
That highte Jerusalem celestial
And if ye vouche sauf anon I shal
Bigynne upon my tale forthwith I preye
Telle youre auys I can no bettre seye
But nathelees this meditacion
I putte it ay vnder correccion
Of clerkes for I am nat textuel
I take but sentence trusteth weel
Therfore I make a protestacion
That I wol stonde to correccion
Upon this word we han assented soone
For as hym semed it was for to doone
To enden in som vertuous sentence
And for to yeve hym space and audience
And bede oure hoost he sholde to hym seye
That alle we to telle his tale hym preye
Oure hoost hadde the wordes for vs alle
Ne preest quod he now fayre yow bifalle
Sey what yow list and we wol gladly heere
And with that word he seyde in this manere
Telleth quod he youre meditacion
But hasteth yow the sonne wole adoun
Beth fructuous and that in litel space
And to do wel god sende yow his grace

Explicit prohemium

Here begynneth the Persons tale

Rem. 6°. State vp vias tuas et inuestiga te ne vis antiquis que est via bona et ambula in ea et inuenietis requiem animabus vestris &c

Oure Lord god of heuene that no man wole perisse but wole that we comen alle to the knowleche of hym and the blisful lif that is perdurable amoneste vs by the prophete Jeremie and seith in thys wyse Stondeth vpon the weyes and seeth and aqueth of olde pathes that is to seyn of olde sentences whiche is the gode weye and walketh in that weye and ye shal fynde refreshynge for youre soules &c Many been the weyes espirituels that leden folk to oure lord thu crist and to the regne of glorie Of whiche weyes ther is a ful noble weye and a convenable which may nat faille

to no man / ne to Comunian / that thurgh synne hath misgon / to the righte
key of Jerusalem celestial / and this key / is cleped penitence / of which
man sholde - gladly herknen and enquere with al his herte / to wyten -
what is penitence / and whennes it is cleped penitence / and in how manye
maneres been the actoures or werkynges of penitence / and how manye spe
ces they been of penitence / and whiche thynges apperten and hirouen
to penitence / and whiche thynges / destroyben penitence / ¶ Seint Am
brose seith / that penitence / is the pleynynge of man / for gilt p^t he hath
doon / and namoore to do any thyng / for which hym ought to pleyne -
¶ And eem dottony seith / penitence is the bayneentynge of man / that
sorweth for his synne / and pyneth hym self / for he hath mysdoon / Pe
nitence / with ctheyne circumstances / is verray repentance of a man that
halt hym self in sorwe / and sothely peyne for his giltes / and for he shal
be verray penitent / he shal first / biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon
and stedefastly ꝑposen in his herte to have shrift / of mouthe / and to doon
satisfaccion / and nevere to doon thyng / for which hym ought moore biwayl
le / or to compleyne / and continue in goode werkes / or elles his repentan
ce may nat availle / ffor as seith Seint ysidre / he is a japere / and a gab
bere / and no verray repentant / that eftsoone doth thyng / for which hym
ought repente / Repynge / and nat for to stynte to synne / may nat availe
¶ But nathelees / men shal hope / that ech tyme p^t man falleth / be
it nevere so ofte / p^t he may arise thurgh penitence / if he have grace / but
certeinly / it is greet doute / ffor as seith Seint Gregorie / whoso arist / he
out of synne / that is charged with the charge of yuel usage / and therfore /
repentant folk / p^t stynte for to synne / and forlete synne / er p^t synne
forlete hem / goostly thanne holdeth hem sikere of hir savacion / And he that
synneth / and verraily repenteth hym in his laste / goostly thanne / yet hopeth /
his savacion / by the grete mercy / of oure lord ihu Crist / for his repentance
but / rede the sikere wey / ¶ And nowe / sith I have declared yow / what
thyng is penitence / now shul ye understonde / that they been / iij / actours
of penitence / ¶ The firste actour of penitence / is that a man be bap
tized after that he hath synned / Seint Augustyn seith / but he be peny
tent / for his olde synful lyf / he may nat bigynne / the newe clene
lif / / for certes / if he be baptized with outen penitence of his olde gilt /
he receyveth the mark / of baptesme / but nat the grete / the remission of
his synnes til he have repentance verray / ¶ Another defaute is this /
that men doon deedly synne / after p^t they han receyved baptesme / ¶ The
thridde defaute is / that men fallen in venial synnes after hir baptes
me / fro day to day / ¶ They of seith Seint Augustyn / that penitence / of
goode and humble folk / is the penitence of every day / ¶ The speces
of penitence / been / ix / ¶ That oon of hem / is solempne / ¶ Another / is
comune / ¶ And the thridde is thise / ¶ Thilke penaunce that is solemp
ne is in two maneres / as to be put out of holy chirche in londe
for slaughtre of children / and swich maner thyng / ¶ Another thyng /
is / whan a man hath synned openly / of which synne / the fame is o
penly spoken in the contree / and thanne holy chirche by jugement /
destreyneth hym / for to do open penaunce / ¶ Comune penaunce
is / that preestes enjoynen men in certein cas / as for to goon ꝑ auen

¶ Hic de penitence

¶ What penitente is

¶ Hic

¶ Hic ꝑm Seint Gregorium

¶ The firste action of penitence

¶ Hic ꝑm Seint Augustinum

¶ The ij. de action of penitence

¶ The iij. de action of penitence

¶ Augustinus

¶ Of ix. speces of penitence

¶ Of penitence solempne

¶ Of comune penitence

¶ Of ꝑnice penaunce

¶ What is bihouely to ꝑfit penitence

¶ Hosees Cnsostom

¶ Of .ij. thynges in Christe the Crafftse onje lord ihu cst

¶ Hoss penitence may be likened to a tree

¶ Thus in Euangelio

¶ Of a seed pt springep of contricion

¶ Salomon

¶ Of the heete of this seed

¶ Tho exemplum

¶ Dauid ꝓpheta

¶ Of .ij. thynges longe to contricion

¶ What contricion is

¶ Hetus sequardus

tnje naked in pilgrimages or baje foot ¶ Tpeynnee penaunce is thilke that men doon alday for ꝑnice synnes of whiche they shryue hem ꝑuely and receyue ꝑnice penaunce ¶ Hoss shal tou vndeystaunde what is bihouely and necessarie to day ꝑfit penitence and this stant on .ij. thynges Contricion of herte Confession of mouth and satisfaccion for which seith seint John Chrisostom ¶ penitence bestreyneth a man to accepte benygnely euery peyne that hym is enioyned with contricion of herte and shrift of mouth with satisfaccion and in keepynge of alle maner humylitee and this is fruytful penitence agayn .ij. thynges in whiche the Crafftse onje lord ihu Crist This is to seyn by delit in thynkynge by vnthankefulnesse in ofendynge and by likkes synful keepynge and agayns thise likkede giltes is penitence that may be likned vn to a tree The roote of this tree is Contricion that hideth hym in the herte of hym p̄t is day repentaunt right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe ¶ Of the roote of Contricion ospryngeth a stalke that beareth braunches and leues of Confession and fruyt of satisfaccion ¶ For which Crist seith in his gospel Booth digne fruyt of penitence for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man ne by the braunches ne by the leues of Confession and therfore onje lord ihu Crist seith thus by the fruyt of hem ye shul knowe hem ¶ Of this roote eek ospryngeth a seed a grace the which seed is moodey of sikenesse and this seed is egre and hoot the grace of this seed ospryngeth of god thurgh remembraunce of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle ¶ Of this matere seith Salomon that in the drede of god man forleteth his synne ¶ The heete of this seed is the loue of god and the desyryng of the ioye ꝑdurable This heete draweth the herte of a man to god and dooth hym hateny his synne for sooth ly there is no thyng that sauoureth so wel to a child as the mylk of his norice ne no thyng moore abhominable than thilke mylk whan it is medled with oothey mete ¶ Right so the synful man that loueth his synne hym semeth that it is to hi moost sweete of any thyng but ꝯo that tyme that he loueth charitee onje lord ihu Crist and desyreth the lif ꝑdurable they nys to hym no thyng moore abhominable for sooth ly the lacke of god is the loue of god for which Dauid the ꝓphete seith ¶ Thou hast loued thy lacke of hates wikkednesse and hate he that loues god despeth his lacke and his lord ¶ This tree saugh the ꝓphete Daniel in the auysion of the kyng Nabugodonosor whan he counseiled hym to do penitence ¶ Pe naunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyuen and he pt holdeth hym in day penitence is blessed after the sentence of Salomon ¶ In this penitence or contricion man shal vndeystonde .ij. thynges that is to seyn what is Contricion and whiche been the causes pt moeuen a man to contricion and how he sholde be contryt and what contricion auailleth to the soule ¶ Shame is it thus pt contricion is the day orke that a man receyueth in his herte for his synnes with thre purpos to shryue hym and to do penaunce and neuermoore to do synne and this orke shal been in this maniere as seith seint Bernard ¶ It shal been hevy and grevous and

ful schayp and poynaunt/ in heste. ¶ffirst/ for man hath agilt his lorde/ & his creatour/ and more schayp and poynaunt/· for he hath agilt hys fadey celestial/· and yet more schayp and poynaunt/· for he hath crucifyed and agilt hym that boghte hym/· Which with his precious blood hap delyuered vs/ fro the bondes of synne/ and fro the cruelte of the deuel and fro the peynes of helle. ¶The causes that oghte meeue a man to contricion/ been·vj·/ ¶ffirst/ a man schal remembre hym of hise synnes/ but looke he/ that thilke remembrance· ne be to hym no delit by no key/ but greet schame and sorwe for his gilt. ¶For Job seith/ synful men/ doon keyes/ worthy of confessioun. ¶And therfore seith Eze chie/·j·Y remembre me/ alle the yeres of my lyf/ in bitternesse of myn herte. ¶And god seith in the apocalipse. ¶Remembreth yow fro whens ye been falle/· for bifore that tyme pt ye synned/ ye were the children of god/ and synnes of the regne of god/ but for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul/ and membres of the feend/ hate of Aungels oblaunge of hooly thinche/ and foode of the falle serpent/· Pytrueel ma tere of the fyr of helle/· And yet more foul and abhominable/ for yo trespassen so ofte tyme/ as doth the hound/ pt retourneth to eten his spe ewing/· And yet be ye foulere for youre longe tourninge in synne & youre synful vsage/ for Which ye be woxen in youre synne as a beest in his dong/ ¶Whiche maneye of thoghtes/ maken a man to hate shame of his synne/ and no delit/· as god seith by the prophete Ezechiel/· ye schal remeeue yow of youre weyes/ and they schulden displese yow/· soothly synnes been the weyes/ that leden folk to helle. ¶The seconde cause that oghte make a man/ to haue desdeyn of synne is this/· That as seith Seint Petre/· Who so that doth synne is thral of synne/· And synne put a man in greet thraldom/· And therfore seith the prophete Ezechiel/·j·Ye oute orrible/ in desdayn of my self/· and etes shel oghten they shame haue desdayn to been despitous & thralles to synne/ and oghte been ashamed of hem self· that god/ of his en deles goodnesse/ hath set hem in heigh estaat/· & yeuen hem wit/ strengthe of body/ heele/ beautee/ prosperitee/ and boghte hem fro·

¶Of·vj· causes pt oghten meeue a man to contricion ~
¶The fifte cause of contricion ~
¶Job ~
¶Ezechias ~
¶Jhs in apocalipse ~
¶Dicit pr Ezechiele prophetam ~
¶The ·ij·de cause of contricion ~
¶Petrus petrus ~
¶Ezechiel prha ~
¶Seneca ~
¶Item Seneca ~
¶Dicit augustinus ~

¶ Prima pars

¶ Prouerbia salomonis

¶ Salomon

¶ Sanctus paulus

¶ Sanctus bernardus

¶ Salomon

¶ Sanctus anselmus

¶ Sanctus ieronimus

¶ Job ad deum

¶ Prouerbia salomonis cuiuslibet

this world / and nat hy tresor / they for schulde he preye to god / to
yeue hym yesprit / a whyle / to bicrepe / and bikaullen his trespas / for
certes / al the werke / that a man myghte make / fro the bigynnyng / of
the world / nys but a litel thyng / at regard / of the werke of helle /

¶ The cause / why / that Job clepeth helle / the lond of derknesse / hudy
stondeth / that he clepeth it lond of erthe / for it is stable / and nemore
schal faille duk. / for he that is in helle / hath defaute of light / natheles
for ctes / the derke light / that schal comme out of the fyr / that evere schal
brenne / schal turne hym al to peyne / pt is in helle / for it shecketh hi
to the horrible develes / that hym tormenten / colded with the derknes
se of deeth / that is to seyn / that he pt is in helle / schal have defaute
of the sighte of god / for certes / the sighte of god / is the lyf perdurable

¶ The derkenesse of deeth / been the synnes / that the wrecched man hath /
don / whiche that destorbeden hym / to see the face of god / right as doop
a derk cloude bitwixe vs and the sonne / ¶ lond of misese / by cause /
that they been / vp / maides of defautes / ageyn / vp / thynges / that folk /
of this world han in this present lyf / that is to seyn honours / delices /
and richesses / ¶ ageyns honour / have they in helle / shame & confusion
for wel ye woot / that men clepen honour / the reverence / that man doth
to man / but in helle / is noon honour ne reverence / for certes / natnoon
reverence schal be don there to a kyng / than to a knave / ¶ for which god
seith / by the prophete Jeremye / thilke folk / pt me despisen / schul been in de
spit / ¶ honour / is eek cleped greet lordshipe / and heighnesse / but in
helle / schul they been al fortroden of develes / and god seith / the hom
ble develes schulle goon and comen vp on the heedes of the sinfulle
folk / and this is for as muche / as the lyf / that they leye in this present
lyf / the more schulle they been abated and defoules in helle / ¶ a
geyns the richesses of this world / schul they han myseise of poure / and
this poure / schal been in foure thynges / in defaute of tresor / of which
that David seith / the riche folk / that embraceden and oneden al hyr
herte to tresor of this world / schul slepe / in the sleepynge of deeth / and
no thyng / ne schal they finden in hyr handes / of al hyr tresor / ¶ and
moore over / the myseyse of helle / schal been / in defaute of mete and drin
ke / for god seith thus by wordes / they schul been chaced with hunger /
and the bestes of helle / schul devouren hem with the bitter deeth / and
the galle of the dragon / schal been hyr drynke / and the venym of
the dragon / hyr entrayles / ¶ and forthy over / hyr myseyse / schal
been in defaute of clothyng / for they schulle be naked in body / as of
clothyng / save the fyr / in which they brenne / and other filthes / &
naked schul they been of soule / as of alle manere vertues / which pt is
the clothyng of the soule / where been thanne the gaye robes / and
the softe sheetes / also / that seith god of
hem / by the prophete Ysaye / that under hem / schul been strawed
mothes / and hyr coverynges / schulle been of wormes of helle / ¶ and
forthy over / hyr myseyse schal been / in defaute of freendes / for
he nys nat poure that hath goode freendes / but there is no freend
for neither god ne no creature / schal been freend to hem / and ech
of hem / schal haten other / with deedly hate / the pines and

¶ Why Job clepeth helle / the lond of derknesse

¶ Of the derknesse of deeth

¶ Of the lond of misese

¶ Of goodes delices & richesses

¶ Thus pr Jeremias prophetha

¶ Thus dicit

¶ Against the richesses of this world

¶ Of defaute of tresor in hell

¶ Of defaute of mete & drynke

¶ Thus pr myseyse

¶ Of defaute of clothyng

¶ Thus pr Ysaias prophetha

¶ Of defaute of freendes

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the aughtren children rebellen agayns fadey and moodey / and kynge de agayns kynede and chiden and despisen euerich of hem oothey / bothe day and nyght · as god seith by the ppbete ysaias ¶ And tho louynge children that chilom loueden so flesshly euerich oothey / wol den euerich of hem eten oothey / if they nyghte · for hoos olden they lous togidre in the peyne of helle / than they hated eth of hem oothey / in the pspitee of this lyf ¶ For tryste wol sin flesshly lone / was deedly hate / as seith the ppbete Dauid ¶ Also so that loueth vnkyndenesse / he hateth his oune / and also so hateth his owene oune / wel he may lone noon oothey / right in no maneye / and they fore is no solas / ne no freendshipe / but / ende the moore flesshly kynredes / that been in helle / the moore tuysynges / the moore thridynges / and the moore deedly hate / they is among hem ~

¶ Thoo the dampned shul shalle haue defaute of alle maner delices / for / ees

¶ And forthey oney / they shul haue defaute of alle maner delices / for ees delices been after the appetites of the .v. wittes / as sighte · heyynge · smel lynge / sauorynge · and touchynge · but in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke · and they fore ful of teres / and hir heyynge ful of waymentynge and of gnyttynge of teeth / as seith thu vnt · hir nose thirles shullen be ful of stynkynge stynk · and as seith ysaye the ppbe te / hir sauorynge shal be ful of bittey galle / · and touchynge of al hir body / ycoules with fyr that neuer shal quenche / and with scorpiones that neuere shul dyen / as god seith by the mouth of ysaye / and for as mu che as they shul nat knowe that they may dyen for peyne / and by hir deep flee fro peyne / that may they vnderstonden by the word of Job / that seith they as is the shadwe of deeth ¶ Betwen a shadwe / hath the likenesse of the thynge · of which it is shadwe / but shadwe is nat the same thynge of which it is shadwe ¶ Right so fareth the peyne of helle / it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwissh · and why? for it peyneth hem euere / as though they sholde dye anon / but ever / they shal nat dye ¶ For as seith seint Gre gorie also euerich the caytifnes / shal be deeth with oute deeth / and ende with outen ende / and defaute with oute failynge / for hir deeth / shal alwey lyuen / and hir ende / shal euere no bigynne / and hir defaute shal nat faille ¶ And they fore seith seint Johan the euangelist · They shullen folwe deeth / and they shul nat fynde hym / · and they shul desiren to dye / and deeth shal flee fro hem ¶ And eek Job seith / that in helle is noon ordre of rule · and al be it so that god hath ordeyned alle thynges in right ordre / and no thynge / without ordre / but alle thynges / been ordeyned and nombred · yet nathelees / they that been dampned / been no thynge / in the ordre / ne holden noon ordre · for the eyther ne shal bere hem no fruyt ¶ For as the ppbete Dauid seith / god shal destroie the fruyt of the eythe / as fro hem / ne water / ne shal yeue hem no moistu re · ne the eyr no refresshynge · ne fyr no light ¶ For as seith seint Basilie the brennynge of the fyr of this world / shal god yeuen in helle / to hem pt been dampned · but the light and the cleernesse / shal be yeuen in heuene to hise children · right as the goode man / yeueth flesh to hise children / and bones to his houndes · And for they shullen haue noon hope to escape seith seint Job atte laste ¶ That they shal honour / and grysly drede dwel len with outen ende · honour / is alwey drede of shame that is to come / and this drede shal euere dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned / and therfore han they lorn al hir hope for · hir · causes ¶ First · for god ~

¶ Thus ~ ysaias ~

¶ Dauid ~ Job ~ ysaias ~

¶ Thoo the dampned han lorn al hir hope for hir causes ~

that is hir Juge / shal be / with outen mercy to hem / · and they may not / plese hym / ne noon of his sakkes / · ne they / ne may yeue no thyng for / hir raunson / ne they haue no voys / to speke to hym / · ne they may not fle fro peyne / · ne they haue no goodnesse in hem / that they mowe shewe to be lieue hem fro peyne ¶ And therfore seith Salomon ¶ The wikked man / ¶ Salomon ⁊
dyeth / and whan he is deed · he shal haue noon hope / to estape fro peyne
¶ Who so thanne wolde wel / understande the peynes / and bithynke hym
wel / that he hath deserued thilke peynes for his synnes / certes / he sholde
haue moore talent / to wepen and to wreyne / · than for to syngen and to pleye /
for as that seith Salomon / · Who so that hadde the science to knowe the pey / ¶ Salomon ⁊
nes that been establissed and ordeyned for synne / he wolde make sorwe /
Thilke science / as seith seint Augustyn / maketh man / to bywepen in his ¶ Augustyn ⁊
herte ¶ The fourthe point / that oghte maken a man to haue contricion / is ¶ Of the iiij. point / that oghte
the sorweful remembrance of the good / that he hath left / to doon / heeyr in maken a man to haue contricion ⁊
eythe / · and eek the good that he hath lorn ¶ Soothly / the goode werkes that he
hath left / · outhey / they been / the goode werkes that he hath wrought / · er he
fel / in to deedly synne / · or elles / the goode werkes that he wroghte / while
he lay in synne ¶ Soothly / the goode werkes that he dide / bifore that he
fil in synne / been al mortefied and astoned and dulled / by the ofte synnyng /
The othere goode werkes that he wroghte / whil he lay in deedly synne / pe
been outrely dede / as to the lyf perdurable in heuene ¶ Thanne thilke goode
werkes / that been mortefied by ofte synnyng / · Thilke goode werkes he
dide / whil he was in charitee / · ne mowe neuer quyken agayn / with outen ¶ Crist ⁊ Ezechiel ⁊
verray penitence / · and therof seith god / by the mouth of Ezechiel ¶ That / if
the rightful man / returne agayn fro his rightwisnesse / and werke wik
kednesse / shal he lyue? nay / · for alle the goode werkes that he hath wroght /
ne shul neuer been in remembrance / for he shal dyen in his synne ¶ And up
on thilke chapitre / seith seint Gregorie thus / · That ther shulle underston
de this principally / · that whan ther doon deedly synne / it is for noght / thanne
ne to repenten / or backen in to memorie the goode werkes / that he han wroght /
biforn / ffor certes / in the werkynge of the deedly synne / ther is no thyng / to
no good werk / that he han doon biforn / · that is for to seyn / · as for to haue ther
by the lyf perdurable / in heuene / · but natheles / · the goode werkes quyken agayn
and comen agayn / and helpen and auailen / to haue the lyf perdurable in
heuene / whan he han contricion / · but soothly / the goode werkes that men
doon / whil they been in deedly synne / for as muche / as they were doon
in deedly synne · they may neuere quyken agayn / ffor certes / thyng pat neuere
hadde lyf / · may neuere quykene / and natheles / · al be it / that they no a
uaille noght / · to han the lyf perdurable · / yet auailen they / to abregge of
the peyne of helle / · or elles / to geten temporal richesse · / or elles / that god
wole / the rather enlumyne / and lightne the herte of the synful man / to
haue repentance / · and eek they auailen / for to vsen a man to doon goode
werkes / that the feend / haue the lasse power of his soule / · and thus ·
the custos lord thu crist / · wolde that no good werk / be lost / · for in dou
bte / it shal auaille / · but for as muche / as the goode werkes that men
doon / whil they been in good lyf / · been al mortefied / by synne folwynge ·
And eek / forth that alle the goode werkes / that men doon / whil they been
in deedly synne / been outrely dede / for to haue the lyf perdurable / wel ·

Prima pars

may that man that no good seyth ne doth / synge thilke nekke flensshe song Hay tout ysu mon temps & mon labour Affor certes / synne byreueth a man / bothe goodnesse of nature / and eek / the goodnesse of gōd / Affor soothly / the grace of the hooly goost / fayeth lyk fyr / that may nat been ydel / for fyr / fayleth / anoon as it forleteth his werkynge / and right so · grace fayleth anoon as it forleteth his werkynge / thē leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie / that oonly is bihight / to goode men that labouren and werken / Wel may he be sory thanne / that al his lif to god / as longe as he hath lyued / and eek / as longe as he shal lyue / that no goodnesse ne hath / to paye with his dette / to god / to whom he oweth al his lyf / · ffor trust wel / he shal yeuen acountes / as seith seint Bernard / of alle the goodes / that han be yeuen hym in this present lyf / · and hoso / he hath hem despended / moost so muche / · that they shal nat passe an heer of his heed / · ne a moment / of an houre / ne shal nat passe of his tyme / that he ne shal yeue of it a rekenyng ¶ The fifthe thyng / that oghte moeue a man to contricion / is remembrance of the passion / that oure lord ihū crist suffred for oure synnes / for as seith seint Bernard ¶ Whil that I · lyue / I shal have remembrance of the wsemblee / that oure lord crist suffred in his comynge / · his werynesse in trauaillyng / · his temptacions whan he fasted / · his longe wakynges / whan he preyde / · his teres / whan that he weep / for pitee · of good grete / · the shame / and the shame / and the filthe / that men seyden to hym / · of the foule spittyng / that men spitte in his face / · of the buffettes that men yaven hym / · of the foule mokkes / and of the repreues / that men to hym seyden / · of the nayles / and whiche he was nayled to the croys / · and of al the remenant / of his passion that he suffred for myne synnes / and no thyng / for his gilt / ¶ And · ye shul vnderstonde / that in manne synne / is euery manere of ordre or ordinance turned vp so doun ¶ ffor it is sooth / that god and reson · & sensualitee / and the body of man / been ordeyned / that euereth of thise foure thynges / sholde haue lordshipe on that oother / · as thus / · god sholde haue lordshipe on reson / · and reson on sensualitee / · and sensualitee on the body of man / · but soothly / whan man synneth / al this ordre or ordinance / is turned vp so doun ¶ And therfore thanne / for as muche as the reson of man / ne wol nat be subget / ne obeisant to god that is his lord by right / · therfore / leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde haue on sensualitee / and eek on the body of man / · and thus / · ffor sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns reson / · and by that / they leseth reson the lordshipe on sensualitee / and on the body / · for right as reson is rebel to god / right so / is bothe sensualitee / rebel to reson / and the body also ¶ And ctes this disordinance and this rebellion / oure lord ihū crist aboghte vp on his precious body ful deere / and herkneth in which wise ¶ ffor as muche thanne as reson / is rebel to god / therfore / is man worthy to have sorwe / and to be deed / · this suffred oure lord ihū crist for man / after that he hadde be betrayed of his disciple / and bifleyned and bounde / so that his blood braste out at euery nayl of his handes / as seith seint Augustyn ¶ And forther ouer / for as muchel as reson of man / ne wol nat daunte

Beatus Bernardus

Of the .v. thyng / that oghte moeue a man to contricion ·

Beatus Bernardus

Thoo in manes synne / is euery manere of ordre or ordinance turned vp so doun ·

Beatus Augustinus

sensualitee than it may / therfore is man worthy to have shame
and this suffred our lord Ihu crist for man than they spetten in
his visage ¶ And forther ouer / for as muchel thanne / as the caytyf
body of man is rebel / bothe to reson and to sensualitee / therfore is it
worthy the deth ¶ And this suffred our lord Ihu crist for man vp on
the croys / where as they nas no part of his body free / with outen
greet peyne and bittre passion ¶ And al this suffred Ihu crist / pt neuer
forfeted / to muchel and peynes for the thynges that I neuer defued
and to muche defouled / for shendshipe that man is worthy to have
And therfore may the synful man wel seye as seith seint Bernard
amysses be the bitternesse of my synne / for which they moste be suf
fred so muchel bitternesse / ffor certes / after the diuse discordances
of oure vikkednesses was the passion of Ihu crist / ordeyned in diuse
thynges / as thus ¶ Certes / synful mannes soule is betrayed of the
deuel / by coueitise of temporel prosperitee / and dorued by deceite
than he cheseth flesshly delices / and yet is it tormented by impa
cience of aduersitee and despeir by seruage and subiection of synne / &
atte laste / it is slayn finally ¶ ffor this disordinaunce of synful
man was Ihu crist betrayed / and after that was he bounde that
nam for to vnbynden vs / of synne and peyne / thanne was he by
sworen that oonly / sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and
of alle thynges ¶ Thanne was his visage that oghte be desired to
be seyn of al man kynde / in which visage aungels desiren to looke
vnkyndly bispet / thanne was he scorned / that no thyng hadde agilt /
and finally / thanne was he crucified and slayn ¶ Thanne was accom
plices the word of ysaye / that seith / that he was wounded / for our
mysseses / and defoules for our felonies ¶ Look seith that Ihu crist /
took vp on hym self the peyne of alle our vikkednesses / muchel
oghte synful man repen and bewayle / that for his synnes goddes
sone of heuene / sholde al this peyne endure ¶ The oxte thyng pt
oghte moeue a man to contricion / is the hope of thynges / that is
to seyn / forgifnesse of synne / and the yifte of grace / wel for to do /
and the glorie of heuene / with which god shal geldone a man for his
goode deedes ¶ And for as muche as Ihu crist yeueth vs thise yiftes
of his largesse / and of his oniuersel bountee / therfore is he cleped / Ihus
Nazarenus rex Iudeorum ¶ Ihus / is to seyn sauueour / or saluacion
on whom / men shul hope / to han forgifnesse of synnes / which that
is verray saluacion of synnes / and therfore / seyde the aungel to Ioseph
Thou shalt clepen his name Ihus / that shal sauen his peple of hir
synnes / and heer of seith seint Peter / ther is noon oother na
me vnder heuene / that is yeue to any man by which a man may
be saued but oonly Ihus / Nazarenus / is as muche for to seye / as
florissynge / in which a man shal hope / that he pt yeueth hym remis
sion of synnes / shal yeue hym eek grace wel for to do / for in the flour
is hope of fruyt / in tyme comynge / and in forgifnesse of synnes
hope of grace / wel for to do ¶ Was atte dore of thyn herte seith Ihus
and clepeth for to entre / he that openeth to me / shal han forgifnesse
of synne / and wol entre in to hym by my grace / and soupe with hym

¶ Crist Bernardus

¶ Ysayas

¶ Of the .vj^e. thyng that oghte moeue a man to con tricion thurgh hope of my thynges

¶ Here the aungel spak to Ioseph

¶ Crist Petrus

by the goode keyes that he shal doon / whiche keyes / been the foode of god / and he shal soupe with me / by the yete ioye that I shal ye nen hym. Thus shal man hope / for hise keyes of penaunce / that god shal yeuen hym his regne / as he bihooteth hym in the gospel /

Whoo a man shal be verray penitent

Whoo a man shal vnderstonde in which maneye / shal been his contricion / I seye / that it shal been wydsal and total / this is to seyn a man shal be verray repentaunt / for alle hise synnes that he seeth doon in delit of his thoght / for delit is ful pilous / ffor they been two maner of consentynges / that oon of hem / is cleped consentynge of affeccion / whan a man is moeved to do synne / and deliteth hym longe / for to thynke on that synne / and his reson apreyueth it / wel that it is synne / a gayns the lawe of god / and yet his reson / refreyneth nat his foul delit / or talent / though he be wel aqwyt / that it is / agayns the defence of god / al though his reson ne consente noght / to doon that synne in dede / yet seyn olde doctours / that swich delit / that dwelleth longe / it is ful pilous / al be it neuer so lite. And also / a man sholde / forbere namely / for al that evere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god with pfit / consentynge of his reson / for they / of is no doute / that it is deedly synne in consentynge / ffor eke / they / is no deedly synne / that it nas first in mannes thoght / and after / that in his delit / and so forth / in to / consentynge and in to dede / Wherfore I seye / that many men ne repenten hem neuer of swiche thoghtes and delites / ne neuer shryuen hem of it / but only / of the dede of grete synnes outward / Wherfore I seye / that swiche wikked delites / and wikked thoghtes / been subtile bigileres / of hem that shullen be dampned. Wherfore euery man ogh̄te to forbere / for his wikkede wordes / as wel / as for his wikkede dedes / / for certes / the repentaunce of a singuler synne / and nat repente of alle hise othere synnes / / or elles repenten hym / of alle hise othere synnes / And nat of a singuler synne / may nat availle / / for certes / god almyghty / is al good / and therfore he forgeueth al / or elles right noght / And seyn of seint Augustyn / / that / god is enemy to euerich synnere / / and whoso that ne he that obserueth o synne / / shal he have forgyfnesse of tho remenaunt of hise othere synnes? / may And forther euery contricion sholde be hoolly / sorweful and anguissous / / And therfore / yeueth hym god pleynly his mercy / and therfore / whan my soule was anguissous with inne me / I hadde remembraunce of god that my preyere myghte come to hym. Forther euery contricion moste be continuel / / And that man have stedefast purpos to shryuen hym / and for to amenden hym of his lyf / / ffor sooth / whil contricion lasteth / man may euere have hope of forgyfnesse / and of this / cometh hate of synne / / that destroyeth synne / bothe in hym self / / and eek in sothery / folk / at his pocket / / ffor which seith Dauid / ye that louen god / hateth wikkednesse / for tweyfeth wel to love god / is for to love that he loueth / and hate that he hateth. The laste thyng / that man shal vnderstonde in contricion / is this / Whey of / may profiteth contricion. I seye / that certeyne contricion / delyuereth a man fro synne / / of which that Dauid seith / / I seye / quod Dauid /

Of two maneye of consentynges

Whoo a man ogh̄te to repenten hym / for his wikkede wordes / as wel as for his wikkede dedes

Seint Augustinus

Whoo contricion sholde be hoolly / sorweful

Whoo contricion moste be continuel

Dauid

Whey of contricion availleth

Dauid

that is to seyn ¶ Those sennes semely to shyne me and thou lord releesdest my eyne ¶ And right so as contricion auailleth noght Eithouten sad purposes of shrifte if man hadde oppurtunitee right so litel profiteth shrifte or satisfaccion Eithouten contricion ¶ And moore ouer contricion destroyeth the prison of helle and maketh hayr and fieble alle the strengthes of the deueles and restoreth the yiftes of the hooly goost and of alle goode vertues and it clenseth the soule of synne and delyuereth the soule fro the peyne of helle and fro the compaignye of the deueles and fro the seruage of synne and restoreth it to alle goodes espirituels and to the compaignye and communyon of hooly chirche ¶ And forther ouer it maketh hym that shildom was oone of the to be oone of grace and alle this thynges been preued by hooly writ and therfore he that sholde sette his entente to thise thynges he ne sholde neuere cese for soothly he ne sholde nat thenne al his lyf haue corage to synne but yeuen his body and al his wille to the seruice of ihu crist and they of doon hym homage for soothly oure eterne lord ihu crist hath araysed vs so debonairly in oure folies that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a wery song he myghten alle synne

¶ Those contricion destroyeth the prison of helle

¶ Those contricion maketh hym that shildom was oone of the to be oone of grace

¶ Explicit prima pars penitencie Et sequit secunda pars eiusdem

The seconde partie of penitence is confession that is signe of contricion ¶ Wherfore shul ye vnderstonde what is confession and wherfore it ought to neuere ne sholde be doon or noon and whiche thynges been conuenable to thilke confession ¶ First shal ye vnderstonde that confession is shrifte of synnes to the preest this is to seyn verray for he moste confessen hym of alle the condicions that bilongen to his synne as ferforth as he kan al moot be seyd and no thyng excuses ne hyde ne forkuttes and noght amenuse thee of thy goode dedes ¶ And forther ouer it is nedeful to vnderstonde whiche synnes that synnes aquyngen and whiche they encreessen and whiche they been ¶ Of the aquyngynge of synnes seith seint paul in this wise that right as by a man synne entred first in to this world and thurgh that synne deeth right so thilke deeth entred in to alle men that synneden and this man was adam by whom synne entred in to this world whan he brak the comaundement of god And therfore he that first was so myghty that he sholde nat haue dyed but oonly for that he moste nedes dye eftsoones he sholde or noon and al his progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden ¶ Loke that in the estaat of innocence whan adam and eue naked weren in paradys and no thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse Loke that the serpent that was moost sly of alle oother beestes that god hadde maked spak to the womman Why comaundes god to yow ye sholde nat eten of euery tree in paradys The womman answerde Of the fruyt of oure tree we eten but sothly

¶ That confession is

¶ Of aquyngynge of synnes secundum paulum

¶ Of the temptacion of adam in paradys

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of the fruyt of the tree/ that is in the myddel of paradys/ god forbad
vs for to ete/ and nat touchen it/ lest peraventure we sholde dyen/ the
eddrent answerde to the womman/ nay/ nay/ ye shul nat dyen of deth/
for sothe god woot/ that what day/ that ye eten therof/ youre eyen
shul opene/ and shul been as goddes knowynge good and yvel/
The womman thanne sawgh/ that the tree was good to feedynge/ and
fayr to the eyen/ and delitable to the sighte/ she took of the fruyt/ of
the tree/ and eet/ it/ and yaf to hir housbonde/ and he eet/ and anoon
the eyen of hem bothe openeden/ and whan that they knewe that/
they were naked/ they sowed of fige leves a manere of breches/ to hi
den hir membres/ Thise may ye seen/ that deedly synne/ hath first/
suggestion of the feend/ as sheweth heere by the maner/ and/
afterward/ the delit of the flesh/ as sheweth heere by Eve/ and/
after that/ the consentynge of reson/ as sheweth heere by Adam/ for
trust wel/ though so were/ that the feend tempted Eve/ that is to/
seyn the flesh/ and the flesh hadde delit/ in the beautee of the fruyt/
defended/ yet ceesed/ til that reson/ that is to seyn Adam/ consen
ted to the etynge of the fruyt/ yet stood he in thestaat of innocence
Of thilke Adam/ took we thilke synne originael/ for of hym flesh
ly/ descendeth we alle and engendred/ of vile and corrupt ma
tere/ and whan the soule/ is put in oure body/ right anon/ is
contract/ originael synne/ and that/ pt was erst/ but conly peyne
ne of concupiscence/ is afterward/ bothe peyne and synne/ and/
therfore/ we alle been dampnables of wrathe and of dampnacion
perdurable/ if it were baptesme that we receyven/ which bynyme
eth vs the vilte/ but/ for sothe/ the peyne dwelleth with vs/
as to temptacion/ which peyne/ highte concupiscence/ whan it
is wrongfully disposed/ or ordeyned in man/ it maketh hym
coveite by coveitise of flesh/ flesshly synne/ by sighte of his
eyen/ as to erthely thynges/ and coveitise of hynesse/ by pryde of
herte/ Now as for to speken of the firste coveitise/ that is
concupiscence after the lacke of oure membres/ that weren so
perfitliche ymaked and by rightful juggement/ of god ful seye
for as unethe/ as man is nat obeisaunt to god that is his lord/
therfore/ is the flesh to hym disobeisaunt/ thurgh concupiscence
which yet is cleped norissynge of synne and occasion of syn
ne/ therfore/ al the while that a man hath in hym/ the peyne
of concupiscence/ it is impossible/ but he be tempted somtime
and moeved in his flesh to synne/ and this thyng may nat/
faille as longe as he lyveth/ it may wel wexe feble and
faille by vertu of baptesme/ and by the grace of god/ thurgh pen
tence/ but fully/ ne shal it neigh nevere/ that he ne shal som
tyme/ be moeved in hym self/ but if he were alienated by
sikenesse or by malefice of sorcerie/ or colde drynkes/ for lo
what seith seint Paul/ The flesh coveiteth agayn the spi
rit/ and the spirit/ agayn the flesh/ they been so contrarie/ a
go sothly/ that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde
The same seint Paul after his grete penaunce in Cater

of coveitise of con
cupiscence

Sanctus paulus

and in lond / in watey by nyght and by day in gret ꝑt / a
in gret peyne / In lond / in trauayne / in thurst / in cold and in clothles
and ones stones almoost to the teeth / yet seyde he allas I caytyf
man / who shal delyuere me fro the prison of my caytyf body / and
seint Jerome whan he longe tyme hadde dwelled in desert / where / Sanctus Jeronimus
as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde bestes / where as he ne
hadde no mete but herbes and water to his drynke ne no bed but
the naked erthe for which his flesh was blak as an Ethiopeen
for heete and my defoyed for cold / yet seyde he that the hoot
wynge of lecherie boyled in al his body / wherfore I crie and yow
ferfully / that they been deceyued that seyn that they ne be nat temp
ted in hir body / witnesse on seint Jame the apostel / that seith that / Sanctus Jacobus apostolus
euery wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence / that is to seyn
that euerich of vs hath materye and occasion to be tempted of the no
risshinge of synne that is in his body / and therfore seith seint
Johan the Euangelist / If that we seyn that we beth with oute syn
ne / we deceyue vs selue / and trouthe is nat in vs / Wel ought shal. / Quod synne begeth or
ye vnderstonde / in what maner that synne begeth / or encreesseth / encreesseth in man
in man / The firste thyng / is thilke norissinge of synne of which
I spak biforn / thilke fleshly concupiscence / and after that / couth
the subiection of the deuel / this is to seyn / the deueles bely / with
which he blowbeth in man the fir of fleshly concupiscence / and after
that / a man bithynketh hym / whether he wol doon or no thilke thing
to which he is tempted / and thanne / if that a man withstonde and
weyue the firste entrisshinge of his flesh / and of the feend / thanne is it
no synne / and if it so be that he do nat so / thanne feeleth he anoon a
flambe of delit / and thanne is it good to be war / and kepen hym wel
or elles he wol falle anon into consentinge of synne / and thanne wol
he do it / if he may haue tyme and place / and of this materye seith ho
lyses by the deuel in this manere / The feend seith / I wole chace and Hoolyses ꝑ demoneu
pursue the man by slikkes suggestion / and I wole hente hym by moe
uynge / or stirynge of synne / I wol departe my prise or my praye by
deliberacion / and my lust / shal been accompliced in delit / I wol departe
my wyf in consentinge / For certes / right as a wyf departeth a
thyng / in two pertes / right so consentinge departeth god fro man / and
thanne wol I sleen hym / with myn hand in dede of synne / thus seith
the feend / for certes thanne is a man al dees in soule / and thus is
synne accompliced by temptacion by delit / and by consentinge / and
thanne is the synne / cleped actuel / For sothe synne is in two Of synne in two maneres
maneres / outher it is venial / or deedly synne / Soothly / whan / venial and deedly
man loueth any creature more than ihu crist / oure creatour / thanne
is it deedly synne / And venial synne is it / if man loue ihu crist /
lasse than hym / For sothe the dede of this venial synne is ful perilous
for it amenuiseth the loue that men sholde han to god more and more
and therfore / if a man chalenge hym self with manye suche venial
synnes / certes but if so be that he continue desperaunce hym of heu
by shrifte / they wolle ful lightly amenuise in hym al the loue that he
hath to ihu crist / and in this wise / skippeth venial in to deedly synne

Secunda pars

ffor certes the moore that a man chaungeth his soule fro vertual synne
the moore is he enclyned to fallen in to deedly synne. And therfore lith
we nat be necligent to deschargen vs of venial synnes. ffor the gode seith
that manye smale makeu a greet. And herkne this ensample. A greet
vessel of the see mouth conteyne with to greet a violence that it drey
cheth the ship. And the same hayn doth conteyne the smale droppes of
watey that entren thurgh a litel perale in to the thurrok. And in the botme
of the ship if men be so necligent that they ne deschaye hem nat by
tyme. And therfore al though they be a differeuce bitwixe these two ma
nes of drenchynge. algates the ship is dreynt. Right so fareth it som
tyme of deedly synne and of anoyouse venyale synnes. whan they
multiplie in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loueth
thurgh whiche he synneth venyally. is as greet in his herte as the lo
ue of god or moore and therfore the loue of euery thyng. that is nat di
rect in god ne don principally for goddes sake. al though that a man loue
it lasse than god yet is it venial synne. And deedly synne whan the
loue of any thyng. reyseth in the herte of man as muchel as the loue
of god or moore. Deedly synne as seith seint Augustyn is. whan a
man turneth his herte fro god whiche that is verray soueryn bountee that
may nat chaunge and yeueth his herte to thyng that may chaunge
and flitte. And certes that is euery thyng save god of heuene. ffor
dooth is that if a man yeue his loue the which pt he oweth al to
god with al his herte. vn to a creature. certes as muche as he yeueth
of his loue to thilke creature so muche he bireueth fro god and ther
fore dooth he synne. for he that is dettour to god. ne yeldeth nat to
god al his dette that is to seyn al the loue of his herte. For oftsith
man vnderstondeth gendally which is venial synne. thanne is it
conenable to telle specially of synnes whiche that many a man
paventure ne deweth hem nat synnes and ne shryueth hem
nat of the same thynges and yet natheles they been synnes.
Soothly as thise clerkes writen this is to seyn. that at euery tyme
that a man eteth or drynketh more than suffiseth to the sustenaunce
of his body vn to ten he dooth synne. And eek whan he speketh moo
re than nedeth it is synne. Eke whan he herkneth nat benignely
the complaynt of the poure. Eke whan he is in heele of body and whol
nat faste whan hym oghte faste with outen cause resonable. Eke
whan he sleepeth moore than nedeth. or whan he comth by thilke en
cheson to late to thynke or to othere werkes of charite. Eke whan he
weyeth his wyf. with outen couetyse of engendrure to the honour
of god. or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body.
Eke whan he wol nat visite the syke and the prisoner if he may.
Eke if he loue wyf or child. or oother worldly thyng. moore than
reson requireth. Eke if he flatere or blaundise moore than hym
oghte for any necessitee. Eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the
almesse of the poure. Eke if he apparaylleth his mete moore de
lycyously than nede is or ete to hastily by likerousnesse. Eke if he
tale vanytees at chirche or at goddes seruice or that he be a
talkere of ydel wordes of folye or of vnthrifte. for he shal yelde

Thus seyeth Augustyn

Of many suche synnes

acountes of it/ at the day of doome/. Eke/ whan he buyeth/ or assuyeth
to do thynges/ that he ne may nat/ ꝑforme ¶ Eke/ whan that he/ by lightnesse or folie/ myssayeth/ or storueth his neighebore ¶ Eke/ whan he hath
any lykes suspecion of thyng/ they/ he ne doot of it no doothfastnesse/
Thise thynges and mo lyth oute nombre/ been synnes/ as seith seint/
Augustyn ¶ Wel shal men vndeystonde/ that al be it so/ that noon
entirely man/ may eschue alle venial synnes/. yet may he restreyne
synne/ by the brennynge loue/ that he hath to oure lord ihu crist/. and
by preyeres and confession and othere goode keyes/. so that it shal
but litel greue/. for as seith seint augustyn ¶ If a man loue god in ¶ Augustinus
reson/ that al that euer he doth/ is in the loue of god/ and for the
loue of god dayly/ for he brenneth in the loue of god/ looke how muche
that a drope of water/ that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth
or greueth/ so muche anoyeth a venial synne vnto a man/ that is ꝑfit
in the loue of ihu crist ¶ Men may also/ restreyne venial synne/ by
receyuynge deuoutly/ of the precious body of ihu crist/. by receyuyng ek
of hooly water/. by almesdede/. by general confession of confiteor at
masse and at complyn/ and by blessynge of bisshopes and of preestes
and othere goode keyes

¶ Explicit secunda pars ꝑnitencie &

¶ Sequit de septem ꝑcatis mortalibz/ et eor dependenciis
circumstanciis & speciebz

¶ De superbia

Wel is it/ bihouely thyng/. to telle/ whiche been the deedly
synnes/ this is to seyn/ chiefsynnes of synnes/. alle they
renne in oon lees/ but in diuerse maneres ¶ Loo/ been they de
ꝑes chiefsynnes/ for as muche as they been chief/. and springen
of alle othere synnes/ ¶ Of the roote/ of thise .vij. synnes/ than
ne is ꝑride the general roote of alle synnes/. ffor of this roote/ spryn
gen certein braunches/. as ire. enuye. wrathe/ or sleuthe. auarice/
or couetise to commune vndeystondynge/. Glotonye. and lecherye.
And euerich of thise chief synnes hath hise braunches & hise twigges
as shal be declared/ in hire chapitres folwynge/. And thogh so be
that no man kan outrely telle/ the nombre of twigges and of the
speynes that cometh of ꝑride/. yet shal I shewe a ꝑtie of hem/ as ye
shul vndeystonde ¶ They is/ inobedience. Avaunterynge. ypocrisie.
despit. Arrogance. Impudence. Swellynge of herte. Insolence
Elacion. Impacience. Stryf. Contumacie. ꝑsumption. Irreue
rence. ꝑtinacie. Veyne glorie/ and many another twig/ that I kan
nat declare ¶ Inobedient is he/ that disobeyeth for despit/ to the ¶ Of inobedience
comandementz of god/. and to hise sovereyns/. and to his goostly
fadir ¶ Avaunterour is he/ that boosteth of the good/ or of the ¶ Of avaunterynge
bountee/ that he hath don ¶ Ypocrite is he/ that hideth his ¶ Of ypocrisie
synne/ wel as he is/. and shewith hym/ wel as he nogh̄t/ is

Of despit
Of arrogance
Of impudence
Of rebellynge of hte
Of insolence
Of elacion
Of impacience
Of contumacie
Of presumpcion
Of inobedience
Of pinacie
Of veyne glorie
Of iangelynge
Of othere pmee speces of pride
Of two maneres of pde
Of superfluite & outrageous array of clothynge

Despitous is he that hath despeyn of his neighebore that is to seyn- of euene hsteue or hath despit to doon that hym ought to do Arrogant is he that thynketh pt he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath nought or weneth that he sholde haue heu by hise deseytes. or elles he demeth- that he be that he nys nat Impudent is he. that for his pride hath no shame of hise synnes Rebellynge of herte is. Shal a man reioy- seth hym of ham that he hath doon Insolent is he. that despiseth in his iuggement alle otheye folk as to regard of his value. And of his comynge. And of his spekynge. And of his bering Elacion is shal- he ne may nowhey suffre to haue maistrye ne felaschipe Impacient is he. that wol nat been ytaught ne undernome of his vice and by stif- heueth thouthe bitynghy and defendeth his folye Contumacy is he. that thugh his indignacion is agayns euerich auctorite or power of hem that been hise ordeynes Presumpcion is shal a- man vndertaketh an emprise that hym ought nat do or elles that he may nat do and this is called Inquidie Inobedience is shal- nen do nat hono^r^ theye as hem ought to doon and shuten to be reuerences Pertinacie is. shal man defendeth hise folies. and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. Veyne glorie is for to haue pomp and delit in his temporeel hynesse and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat Iangelynge is shan men speken to muche biforn folk. and clappen as a mille and taken no keep shat they seye And yet is they a- pmee spece of pride that shameth first for to be saleewed er he shold salewe al be he lasse worth than that oothey is parauenture. and ek he shameth or despiseth to sitte or elles to goon aboue hym in the wey or kisse pay. or been enclyned or goon to offryng biforn his neigh- bore and swiche semblable thynges agayns his dueree parauenture but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a prood desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple Loo been they two maneres of pde. that oon of hem is with inne the herte of man and that oothey is with oute. of whiche oothly thise forseyde thynges and no than I haue seyd aperteneth to pride that is in the herte of man and that otheye speces of pride been with oute. but natheles that oon of thise speces of pride is signe of that oothey. right as the gaye leef sel atte dame is signe of the tyn that is in the celer. And this is. in manye thynges as in spechе and contenaunce and in outrageous array of clothynge. for certes if they ne shadde be no synne in clothynge Crist sholde nat haue noted and spoken of the clothynge of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith seint Gregorie That precious clo thynge is reprouable for the deythe of it. and for his softenesse and for his straungenesse and degisynesse and for the superfluitee and for the inordinat desmesurance of it Allas may men nat seen as in- oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothynge. and namely in to muche superfluite or elles in to desordinat desmesurance As to the firste synne in superfluitee of clothynge which that maketh it so deere to haue of the peple. nat oonly the cost of embrowdynge the degise endentynge barrynge ocindynge palynge tryndynge or bendynge and semblable waste of clooth in vanitee but they is

¶ Superbia ⁊

also costlewe furrynge in hir gownes / so muche pounsynge of chisel / to maken holes / so muche daggynge of sleves / forth with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forsede gownes / trailynge in the dong / and in the mire on horse and eek on foote as wel of men as of wommen / that al thilke trailynge is verily as in effect / wasted / consumed / thrednake / & roten with dounge / rather / than it is yeven to the poure / to greet damage of the forseyde poure folk / and that in ondry wise / this is to seyn / that the moore that cloth is wasted / the moore it costeth to the peple for-the straungnesse ¶ And forther over / if so be / that they wolde yeven swich pounsoned and dagged clothynge / to the poure folk / it is nat / convenient / to kepe for hir estaat / ne sufficaunt / to beete hir nedes / tee / to kepe hem / fro the distemperance of the firmament / ¶ Up on / p / oothey side / to speken of the horrible disordinat straungnesse of clothynge / as been thise cutted sloppes or haynselynes / that thurgh hir shortnesse / ne kevere nat / the shameful membres of man / to wikked entente ¶ Allas / some of hem sheewen the bore of hir shap and the horrible swollen membres / that cometh / lik the / maladie of hirnia in the wrappynge of hir hoses / and eek the buttokes of hem faren / as it were the hyndre part / of a sheep ape / in the fulle of the moone ¶ And moore over / the wrecched swollen membres that they shewe / thurgh the degisynge in deptynge of hir hoses in whit and reed / semeth that hadde hir shameful prive membres been flayne ¶ And if so be that they deyden hir hoses / in othere colours / as is whit and blak / or whit and blew / or blak / and reed and so forth / thanne semeth it / as by resoun of colour / that half the part of hir prive membres were corrupt / by the fir / of seint Antony / or by cancre / or by oothey swich meschaunce / ¶ Of the hyndre part of hir buttok / it is ful horrible for to see / for / certes / in that part of hir body / they / as they purgen hir stynkynge / ordure / that foule part / shewe they / to the people proudly in despit / of honestetee / the which honestetee that Jesu crist / and hise freendes / observede / to shewen in hir lyvynge / ¶ Of the outrageous array / of wommen / god woot / that thogh the visages of some of hem / seme ful chaast / and debonaire / yet notifie they / in hir / array of atyr / likerousnesse and pryde ¶ I sey nat / that honestetee in clothynge / of man or womman / is vicious nable / but certes the superfluitee / or / disordinat / straungetee of clothynge / is repreevable ¶ Also / the / syme of aqueraunce / or of apparaille / is in thynges that ap-teenen to / dyynge / as / in to riche / delicat / horses / that been hool / den for delit / that been ful faire / fatte and costlewe / and also to many a vicious knave / that is susteined by cause of hem / in to curious harneys / as in sadeles / in croupes / peytrels and / bridles covered with precious clothynge / and riche / barres and plates / of gold and of silver / for which god seith / by Zakarie the pro-phete / I shal confounde the richesses of swiche horses ¶ This folk / taken litel / reward of the dyynge of goddes sone of heven / ⁊ of his harneys whan he rood up on the asse / And he hadde noon oothey harneys / but the poure clothes of hise disciples / ne / he

¶ Of disordinat straunt-nesse of clothynge

¶ Of outrageous array of wommen

¶ Of outrageous appa-raille / of thynges that apteinen to dyynge

¶ This is Zakarias prophecie

ne rese nat/ that ene he yood on oothey beest/. I speke this/ for the synne of surfluitee/ and nat for resonable honestitee/ whan reson it requireth And forthey/ ceytes pride is greetly notified in holdynge of greet meynee/ whan they be of litel profit/ or of right no profit/ and namely/ whan that meynee/ is felonous and damageous to the peple by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe/ or by key of offices/. ffor etes of the lordes/ ellen thanne hir lordshipe to the deuel of helle/ whanne they susteenen the rikkednesse of hir meynee. For elles/ whan this folk of lowe degree/ as thilke that holden hostelries/ susteynynge the theftes of hire hostileres/ and that is/ in many maneye of deceites/ thilke maneye of folk/ been the flyes that folowen the hony/ or elles/ the houndes/ that folowen the cayeyne/. Right forseyde folk/ strangleth spiritually hir lordshipes/. for which/ thus seith David the prophete/ Wikked beeth woote to me vp thilke lordshipes/. and god yeue that they moote descenden in to helle al doun/ al doun/. for in hire houses/ been iniquites and wikkednesses/ and nat god of heuene/. And ceytes/ but if they doon amendement/. right as god yaf his benyson to Jhasaad by the service of Jacob/ and to Laban/ by the service of Joseph/. right so/ god wol yeue his malison to thilke lordshipes/ as susteenen the wikkednesse of hir seruauntz/ but if they come to amendement. Pride of the table/ appeireth eek/ ful ofte/. for etes riche men been cleped to festes/ and poure folk/ been put abakwey and yebuked Also in excesse of diuerse metes and drynkes/. and namely/ of thilke maneye bake metes & disshe metes bistenynge of tilde fir/ and peynted and castelled with papir/ and semblable fast/ so that it is abusion for to thynke hou deek/ in to greet preciousnesse of vessel/ and curiosite of mynistralcie/ by which a man is stired the moore to delices of lecherie/ if so be that he sette his herte the lasse vpon oure lord thu crist/. certeyn it is a synne/ & certeynly the delices/ myghte been so grete in this caas/ that man myghte lightly falle by hem in to deedly synne. The especes that sourden of pride/ soothly/ whan they sourden of malice ymagined/ auised and forthought/ or elles of vsage/ been deedly synnes/ it is no doute/. And whan they sourden by fieletee vnawysed/ and sodeynly withdrawen ayeyn/ al been they grenouse synnes/. I gesse/ that they ne been nat deedly. Envie myghte men axe/ Envie of that fir sourdeth/ And vnderstonding/ And I seye/ somtyme it vnderstondeth/ of the goodes of nature/ and somtyme/ of the goodes of fortune/. and somtyme/ of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature/ stonden/ outher in goodes of body/ or in goodes of soule. Certes/ goodes of body/ been heele of body/ as strengthe/ delinernesse/ beautee/ gentries/ franchise. Goodes of nature of the soule been good wit/ as vnderstondynge/ subtil engyn/ vertu natureel/ good memorie. Goodes of fortune/ been richesse/ hyghe degrees of lordshipes/ preisynges of the peple. Goodes of grace/ been science/ power/ to suffre spiritueel trauaille/ benignitee/ vertuous contemplation/ withstondynge of temptation/ and semblable thynges/. of which forseyde goodes/ certes it is a ful greet folye/ a man to prisen hym/ in any of hem alle. Ne as for to speken of goodes of nature/. god woot/ that somtyme we han shame in nature/ as muche to ome

23 1 x

Of pride in holdynge of greet meynee

Dauid ypha

Of pride of the table

Of excesse of diuerse metes and drynkes

Of to greet preciousnesse of vessel. And curiosite of mynistralcie

Of the especes that sourden of pride

Envie of pride sourdeth and springeth

Of goodes of nature

Of goodes of body

Of goodes of nature of the soule

Of goodes of fortune

Of goodes of grace

damage as to our ꝓfit as for to expresen of heele of body · certes it passeth
ful lightly and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun of the sikenesse of oure soule · for
god woot the flesh is a ful greet enemy to the soule · and therfore the
more that the body is hool the more be we in ꝑil to falle ¶ Eke for to
pryde hym in his strengthe of body it is an heigh folye · ffor certes the
flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit · and ay the more strong that the flesh
is the sorier may the soule be · and ouer al this strengthe of body and
worldly haboundaunce causeth ful ofte many a man to ꝑil and meschaunce
¶ Eek for to pryde hym of his gentrie is ful greet folie for ofte tyme the
gentrie of the body binymeth the gentrie of the soule · and eek we ben
alle of o fader and of o moder · and alle we been of o nature ypoten ·
and corrupt · bothe yliche and poure · ffor bothe o manere gentrie is for to
preise that appalleth manes corage with vertues and moralitees and
maketh hym vicious thilke · for truste wel that ouer what man ꝑ synne
hath maistrie he is a verray thral to synne ¶ Ther been eek many generales
signes of gentillesse · as eschewinge of vice and ribaudye and vilanye
of synne · in word in deed · and coveitise · and sleuthe · and suffre wrong
and cleernesse · and to be liberal · that is to seyn large by measure · for thil
he that passeth measure is folie and synne ¶ Another is to remembre
hym of bountee that he of oother folk hath receyued ¶ Another is to be
benigne to his goode subgetis · wherfore seith Seneca ther is no thing
more covenable to a man of heigh estaat · than debonairetee and pitee
And therfore thise flyes that men clepeth bees · whan they maken hir
hyve · they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may stynge
¶ Another is a man to shewe a noble chiere and a diligent to attayne
to heighe vertuous thinges ¶ Eek certes a man to ꝓve hym in the goo
des of grace is eek an outrageous folie · for thilke yifte of grace that shal
be shad turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine turneth hym to ve
nym and to confusioun as seith seint Gregorie ¶ Certes also wo
ꝑiseth hym in the goodes of ffortune · he is a ful greet fool · for certeyn
me is a man a greet lord by the moore · that is a theef the more worthy
ey it be nyght · and certeyn the richesse of a man is cause of his dis
continue the malices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye through
which he dyeth ¶ Certes the conclusioun of the ꝓvérbe is continue ful
fast and ful hoold for to thryve · this day they ꝓyse to morwe they blame
god woot desyr to shewe conclusioun eek of the ꝓvérbe hath caused deeth
to many a busy man ¶ Now seth that so is that ye shal vndirstonde
what is pryde and whiche been the species of it · and whennes pryde
cometh and eggyngeth

Remedium contra ꝑcim Ouphor

Now shul ye vndirstonde which is the remedie agayns the syn
ne of pryde · and that is humylitee or mekenesse · that is a
vertu through which a man hath verray knowleche of hym self ·
And holdeth of hym self no ꝓys ne deyntee · as in regard of hise de
sertes considerynge euere his freletee ¶ Ther been they · ny · maneres
of humylitee · as humylitee in herte · and another humylitee in his

¶ Of ꝑde of strengthe of body

¶ Of ꝑde of gentrye

¶ Of gendale signes of gentillesse

¶ Senece

¶ Tullius

¶ Of ꝑde in the yiftes of god

¶ Of ꝑde in the goodes of ffortune

¶ Of conclusioun of the ꝓvérbe

¶ Of humilite or mekenesse

¶ Of · ny · maneres of humilitee

¶ Of iij. manes of humilitee in hepte

¶ Of .iij. thynges of humilitee of mouth

¶ Of .iij. maneres of humilitee in herte

¶ What envye is ofen pbin et hu Augustinus

¶ Of .ij. spetes of malice and the fyrste is haydnesse of herte

¶ Of another spece of malice

¶ Of the fyrste spece of envye

¶ Of the .ij. spece of envye

¶ The fyrste spece of bakbityinge

mouth ¶ The thridde is hise hertes ¶ The humilitee in herte is iij. maneres ¶ That oon is whan a man holdeth hym self as nogh with forth biforn god of heuene / another is whan he ne despiseth noon other man ¶ The thridde is whan he ferreth nat / though men holde hym nogh forth ¶ The ferthe is whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacion ¶ Also the humilitee of mouth / is in iij. thynges ¶ In attempree spethe ¶ And in humblesse of spethe ¶ And whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth / that he is wich as hym thynketh that he is in his herte ¶ Another is / whan he preiseth the bountee of another man / and no thyng they of amenuiseth ¶ Humilitee eek in herte is in iij. maneres ¶ The firste is / whan he putteth other men biforn hym ¶ The seconde is to chese the lowheste place ouer al ¶ The thridde is / gladly to assente to counseil ¶ The ferthe is / to stonde gladly to the areste of his conseyus / or of hym / that is in hyer degree / eteem this is a gret deel of humylitee

¶ Sequiti de Invidia

After the wise doctour / after the foule synne of Envye which is / as by the word of the philosophre / sorwe of other mannes prosperitee / and after the word of seint Augustyn / it is sorwe of other mannes hele / and ioye of other mennes harm ¶ This synne is platly agayns the hooly / al be it so that every synne is agayns the hooly goost / yet nathelees for as muche as bountee aperteneth propreli to the hooly / and envye comth of malice / therfore is it propreli / agayn the bountee of the hooly goost ¶ Envye hath malice two speces / that is to seyn haydnesse of herte in wikkednesse / or elles the flesh of man is so blynd that he considereth nat / that he is in synne / or ferreth nat / that he is in synne / Which is the haydnesse of the deuel ¶ That other spethe of malice is whan a man receyueth trouthe / whan he woot / that it is trouthe / and eek whan he receyueth the grace / that god hath yeue to his neighebore / and al this is by envye ¶ Certes this synne is envye the worste synne that is / for soothly / alle othere synnes been somtyme contrey / agayns o special vertu / but certes envye is agayns alle vertues / and agayns alle goodnesses / for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebore / and in this manere it is divers from alle othere synnes ¶ For ther comethe / in thy synne / that it ne hath som delit in it self / save oonly envye / that she hath in it self thre ful wikkede / and sorwe ¶ The speces of envye been thise / The / is first / sorwe of other mannes goodnesse / and of his prosperitee / and prosperitee is hyndely matere of ioye / this is envye a synne agayns kynde ¶ The seconde spece of envye is ioye of other mannes harm / and that is propreli lyk to the deuel / that ioyseth hym of mannes harm ¶ Of this two speces comth bakbityng / and this synne / of bakbityng / or detraccion / hath sevene speces / as thus ¶ Som man preiseth his neighebore by a wikked entente / for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte

atte laste ende / al bey he maketh a but atte laste ende that is
signe of moore blame / than goeth is al the preisynge ¶ The
seconde spece is / that if a man be good / and goeth / or seith a thing
to good entente / the bakbitere wol turne al thilke goodnesse up so
doun / to his shrewed entente ¶ The thridde is / to amenuse
the bountee of his neighebore ¶ The fourthe spece of bakbityng is
this / that if men speke goodnesse of a man / thanne wol the bak
bitere seyn / yee / but swich a man is yet bet than he / in dispreisyn
ge / of hym that men preise ¶ The fifte spece is this / for to con
sente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of /
oothere folk / this synne is ful greet / and ay encreesseth / after the
wikked entente of the bakbitere ¶ After bakbityng / cometh grutch
yng / or murmuracion / and sometyme it sprynigeth of impacience
agayns god / and sometyme agayns man ¶ Agayns god it is / whan
a man grutcheth agayn the peynes of helle / or agayns pouere / or los of
catel / agayn reyn / or tempest / or elles grutcheth that children han
sikenesse / or elles / for that goode men han adversitee / and alle thise
thynges sholde men suffre paciently / for they comen by the right
ful iuggement / and ordinance of god ¶ Sometyme cometh grutchyng
of envie / as Iudas grutched agayns the magdaleyne / whan she en
oynte the heved of oure lord Ihu crist / with his precious oynement /
¶ This manere murmure is swich / as whan man grutcheth / of goodnesse
hym self dooth / or that oothere folk doon of hire owene catel ¶ Som
tyme cometh murmure of pride / as whan Simon the pharisee grutch
ed agayn the magdaleyne / whan she approched to Ihu crist / and
keep at his feet / for hire synnes ¶ And sometyme grutchyng / sou
neth of envie / whan men displeseth a mannes thyng / that is
preyinge / or desireth hym an harm thyng / that is fals ¶ murmure
eek is ofte amonges servantz / that grutchen whan hire maistres
hidden hem doon resonable thynges / and for as muche as they
nat openly with seye the commaundementz of hire maistres / yet wol
they seyn harm / and grutche and murmure prively / for verray despit /
¶ Swiche folk / men clepen the deueles pater noster / thogh so be
that the deuel ne had no maner pater noster / but that wikked folk
yeuen it swich a name ¶ Sometyme grutchyng cometh of ire / or hate
that norisseth rancour in herte / as after shal be seyd
¶ Whanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte / thurgh which bitternesse
every good dede of his neighebor semeth to hym bitter and vnsa
voury ¶ Whanne cometh discord / that destorbeth alle manere of
freendshipe ¶ Whanne cometh sclaundre of his neighebor / al so
he never so trewe ¶ Whanne cometh accusynge / as whan man
seketh occasion to anoyen his neighebor / which that is lyk to the
craft of the deuel / that waiteth bothe nyght and day to accu
sen vs alle ¶ Whanne cometh malignitee / thurgh which a man
anoyeth his neighebor prively / if he may / and if he nogh may al
gate his wikked wil / he shal nat wante / as for to destrien his
hous prively / or empoysone / or sleen his beestes / and som
thable thynges

¶ The .ij. spece of bakbitynge

¶ The .iij. spece

¶ The .iiij. spece

¶ The .v. spece

¶ Of grutchynge / or murmuracion

¶ Of grutchynge / that cometh of envie

¶ Of murmure that cometh of pride

¶ Of murmure that sourseth of envie

¶ Of murmure amonges servantz

¶ Of grutchynge that cometh of ire

¶ Of bitternesse of herte

¶ Of discord

¶ Of sclaundre

¶ Of accusynge

¶ Of malignitee

Remedium contra peccatum Invidie

Holk Sol ¶ speken of the remedie agayns the foule synne of Envye/ ¶ ffirst is the lovynge of god principal/ and lovynge of his neighebor as hym self/ for sothly/ that oon ne may nat been with oute that oother/ And truste wel/ that in the name of thy neighebore/ thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother/ for testes/ alle we have o fadyr fleshly/ and o moodyr/ that is to seyn Adam and Eve/ And eek/ o fadyr espirituel/ and that is god of hevene ¶ Thy neighebore/ aughte holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse/ And therfore seith god/ love thy neighebore as thy self/ that is to seyn/ to salvacion/ of lyf and of soule ¶ And moore over/ thou shalt love hym in Word/ and in benigne amonestynge/ and chastisynge/ and conforten hym/ in hise anoyes/ and preye for hym with al thyn herte ¶ And in dede/ thou shalt love hym in swich wise/ that thou shalt doon to hym in thy lyf/ as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone/ And therfore/ thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked Word/ ne harm in his body/ ne in his catel/ ne in his soule by ensample wikked ensample ¶ Thou shalt nat desiren his wyf/ ne none of hise thynges ¶ Understoond eek/ that in the name of neighebor/ is comprehended his enemy/ For man shal loven his enemy/ by the comandement of god/ And sothly/ thy freend shaltow love in god/ ¶ Ne eye/ thyn enemy/ shaltow love for goddes sake/ by his comandement ¶ For if it were resoun/ a man sholde hate his enemy/ for sothe/ god nolde nat receyven us to his love/ that been hise enemys ¶ Agayns · ij · maneres of thynges that his enemy dooth to hym/ he shal doon · ij · thynges as thus ¶ Agayns hate and vanteuse of herte/ he shal love hym in herte ¶ Agayns chidynge/ and wikkede Wordes/ he shal preye for his enemy ¶ And agayn wikked dede of his enemy/ he shal doon hym bountee ¶ For crist seith/ loveth youre enemys/ and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm/ And eek for hem that yow haten and pursuen · And dooth bountee/ to hem that yow haten ¶ Loo/ thus comaundeth us oure lord jhu crist/ to do to oure enemys/ For sothly/ nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes/ And certes/ oure enemys han moore nede to love than oure freendes/ And they that moore nede have/ certes to hem shal men doon goodnesse/ And certes in thilke dede/ have ye remembrance/ of the love of jhu crist/ that deyde for hise enemys/ And in as muche as thilke love/ is the moore grevous to performe/ in so muche/ is the moore gretter the merite/ And therfore the lovynge of oure enemy/ hath confounded the venym of the devel/ For right as the devel/ is discomfited by humylitee/ right/ so/ is he wounded to the deeth/ by love of oure enemy ¶ certes/ this is love the medicine/ that casteth out/ the venym of envye/ fro mannes herte ¶ The speces of this peccat/ whoso wole be moore large/ i fynde thre/ that is to seyn/ Detraccion/ Murmuracion/ and Bacbityng

¶ Deinde de Ira ·

Now/ after envye/ Sol ¶ destroyen the synne of Ire/ · For sothly/ who so hath envye upon his neighebor/ anon he is wel coward/ fynde hym a matere of chidyng/ in Word/ or

¶ Ira

in dede / ageyns hym / to whom he hath enuye / And as Seint
Ihe of hym / as of enuye / for soothly / he that is proud or enuyous / is
lighstly wroth ¶ This ynne of Ihe / after the Austynyng / of Seint
Augustyn / is likkest til / to been auenged / by word / or by dede / Ihe
after the philosophie / is the fernent blood of man / yquyked in his
herte / thurgh which he wole hym / to hym that he hateth ¶ For ctes the
herte of man by eschawfynge and moeuynge of his blood / weyeth so
trouble / that he is / out of alle iuggement / of resun ¶ But ye shal vn
derstonde / that Ihe is in two maneres / that oon of hem is good / &
that oothey is likkest ¶ The goode Ihe / is by ialousie of goodnes
se / thurgh which / a man is wroth with likkednesse / and ageyns
likkednesse / And they fore seith a wys man / that Ihe is bet than pley
/ This Ihe / is with resonableetee / and it is wroth with outen bitey
nesse / nat wroth ageyns the man / but wroth with the myssede of
the man / as seith the prophete Dauid Irascimini & nolite peccare
¶ Ire vndyrstondeth / that likkes Ihe is in two maneres / that is to
seyn / oseyn Ihe / or hastif Ihe without auisement / and consentynge
of resun / the meenyng / and the cours of this / is / that the resun of man
ne consente nat / to thilke oseyn Ihe / and thanne it is venial ¶ And
they Ihe is ful likkes / that couth of felonie of herte auysed and cast bi
forn / with likkes wil / to do vengeaunce / and they to / his resun consenteth
and soothly / this is deedly synne ¶ This Ihe / is so displesant to god
that it troubleth his hous / and chaceth the hooly goost / out of mannes sou
le / and defouleth and destroyeth the likenesse of god / that is to seyn / the
vertu that is in mannes soule / and put in hym / the likenesse of the deuel
and bynymeth the man / the god / that is / his rightful lord / this Ihe / is a
ful greet displesance to the deuel / for it is the deueles fourneys / that is
enflammed / with the fyr of helle / for ctes / right so / as fyr is moore mighty
ty / to destroyen erthely thynges / than any oothey / element / right so Ihe
is myghty to destroyen alle ghostly thynges ¶ Loke / how that fyr of
smale gleedes / that been almoost dede / wexeth / al reed / whan they been touched with bynnestoon / right so / the hoot ire / of man
whan it is touched / by the pride that is conceyued in mannes herte
/ for certes / fyr ne may nat / comen out of no thyng / but if it were first / in
the same thyng / naturelly / as fyr / is drawen out of flyntes with steel
And right so / as pride is ofte tyme matere of / / right so is rancour / no
yce and kepere of / / hey / is a maner tree as / with oon / yside / that
whan men maken fyr of thilke tree / and couche the coles of it with asshen
soothly / the fyr of it / wol lasten al a yeer / or moore / And right so / fareth
it of rancour / whan it is ones conceyued in the herte of oon men
cestem / it wol lasten perauenture / from oon Estre day / vn to another / Estre
day / and moore / but certes / thilke man is ful fer / fro the mercy of god in
thilke while ¶ In this forseyde deueles fourneys / ther-forgen / iij / chi
ches / / pryde that ay bloweth and encreesseth the fyr / by thisynge & likkes
wordes ¶ Thanne stant / Envye / and holdeth the hoote yren / vpon the hyte
of man / with a peire of longe tonges / of long / rancour / ¶ And thanne
stant the synne of contumelie / or stryf / and cheeste / and bateyeth and
forgeth / by wilde ire / repreuynges / certes / this cursed synne anoyeth

¶ Seneca augustinus & philosophus

¶ Of the iij. maneres

¶ Of good ire

¶ Serpens

¶ Dauid prophe

¶ Of likkes Ihe iij. maneres / and the firste is sodeyn Ihe

¶ Of the .v. couths of felonie of herte auised & cast biforn

¶ Ira non habet ydoneum

¶ Exemplum

¶ Of .iij. chirches / forgen / ed / in the deueles fourneys /

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bothe to the man hym self / and eek to his neighebore ¶ For soothly / almoost
al the harm that any man doth to his neighebore / cometh of Envye / for does
outrageous Envye / doth / al that euel the deuel hym comaundeth / for he ne
spareth neither crist ne his owene moodre / and ne his outrageous angre
he / allas / allas / ful many oon at that tyme / feleth ne his herte ful bitterly
bothe of crist and of alle his halwes ¶ Lo nat this a cursed vice / Envye does
allas / it bynymeth from man his wit / and his resoun and al his solempne
lif espiritueel / that sholde lyven his soule ¶ Lo / it bynymeth eek
goddes due lordshipe / and that is mannes soule / and the loue of his
neighebores / it stynketh eek / alday again trouthe / it reveth hym the qui
ete of his herte / and troubleth his soule ¶ Of Envye comen thise stynkynge
engendrures ¶ First / hate / that is oold Envye / discord / thurgh which a
man forsaketh his olde frendes ful longe ¶ And thanne cometh werre / and
euery wrake of wrong / that man doth to his neighebore / ne bodily / or ne catel
¶ Of this cursed synne of Envye / cometh eek manslaughtre / And vnderstonde
wel / that homycide / that is manslaughtre / is ne diuerse wise ¶ Som manere
of homycide is spiritueel / and som is bodily ¶ Spiritueel manslaughtre
is ne .vj. thynges ¶ First by hate / as seint John seith / he that hateth his
brother / is homycide ¶ Homycide is eek by bakbityng / of which bakbite
res seith Salomon / that they han two scharpe swerdes / with which / the sharpe
neighebores / for soothly / as wikke is / to bynyme his good name / as his lyf
¶ Homycide is eek / ne yeuynge of wikkes counseil by fraude / as for to yeuen
counseil / to a leyser wrongful statutes and tailages / of which seith
Salomon ¶ Leon roryng and bere hongry / been like to the cruel lordshi
pes / ne with holdynge / or abreggynge / of the hyre / or the hyre / or of the wa
ges of seruaunts / or elles ne yiftes / or ne withdrawynge of the almesse of
poure folk / For which the wise man seith ¶ He sleeth hym / that almoost dyeth
for honger / for soothly / but if thou fede hym / thou sleest hym / and alle
thise been deedly synnes ¶ Bodily manslaughtre is / whan thou sleest hym
with thy tonge / in soothe manere / as whan thou comaundest to sleen a
man / or elles / yeuest hym counseil to sleen a man ¶ Manslaughtre ne dede
is ne .iij. maneres ¶ That oon is by lacke / right as a iustice dam
neth hym that is coupable to the deeth / but lat the iustice be war / that
he do it rightfully / and that he do it nat for delit / to spille blood / but
for keepynge of rightwisnesse ¶ Another homycide / is that is doon
for necessitee / as whan a man sleeth another ne his defendaunt / and p^t
he ne may noon other wise escape from his owene deeth / but certeinly
if he may escape with outen manslaughtre of his aduersarie / and sleeth
hym / he doth synne / and he shal leue penaunce as for deedly synne
¶ Eek / if a man / by cas or auenture / shete an arwe / or caste a ston / and
wheth he sleeth a man / he is homycide ¶ Eek / if a woman by intelli
gence / quyeteth hire child ne hire sleepynge / it is homycide and deedly
synne ¶ Eek / whan man destourbeth conception of a child / And ma
keth a woman outher bareyne by drynkynge venemouse herbes / thurgh
which / she may nat conceyue / or sleeth a child by drynkes wilfully /
or elles / putteth eleme material thynges / in hire secree places to slee
the child / or elles / doth unkyndely synne / by which man or woman slee
deth hire nature / in manere or in place / there as a child may nat be conce

¶ Of the engendrures that comen of prise

¶ Of manslaughtre ne diuerse maneres

¶ Of .vj. thynges p^t been in spiritueel manslaughtre

¶ Salomon

¶ Of homycide ne yeuynge of wikkes counseil

¶ Salomon

¶ Sapiens

¶ Of bodily manslaughtre

¶ Of manslaughtre ne dede .ne. / .iij. maneres

¶ Of manslaughtre by lacke

¶ Of homycide doon for necessitee

¶ Of homycide by cas or auenture

¶ Of homycide whan a woman sleeth hire child

¶ Of homycide ne destourbynge of the conception of a child

¶ Iosephus

¶ Ira

nes / or elles / if a woman have conceyued / and slayt hyr child / and sleeth the child / yet it is homycide ¶ Eke sleat seye the eek / of wommen that mor dren hyr children for dreede of worldly shame / certes an horrible homicide

¶ Of wommen þt mordre hyr children / for worldly shame

¶ homycide is eek / if a man approcheth to a woman / by desyr of lecherie thurgh which the child is ypissed / or elles wayteth a woman wityngly / thurgh which she leseth hyr child / Alle thise been homycides / and horrible deedly synnes ¶ Yet comen they of the / manye mo synnes / as eek in word / as in thoght / and in dede / as he that assetteth upon god / or blameth god / of thyng / of which he is hym self guilty / or despriseth god / and alle his halwes / as doon thise cursede hasardours in diverse contrees / This cursed synne doon they / eek han they feeden in hyr sectes ful wikkedly of god / and of hise halwes ¶ also / eek han they tweten openly the sacrement of the auter / thilke synne is so greet / that certes may it been relessed but that the mercy of god / passeth alle hise werkes / it is so greet / and so benigne / thanne cometh of the attry angre / eek han a man / is shryven yly amonested in his shrifte to forleten his synne / thanne wole he bo- angry / and answeren vilenously and angrily / and despenden / or excusen his synne / by cursednesse of his flesh / or elles he dide it / for to holde compaignye with hise felawes / or elles he doth the feend enticed hym / or elles / he dide it for his youthe / or elles / his complexion is so corage ous / that he may nat forbere / or elles it is his destinee / as he seith / vn to a certein age / or elles he seith / it cometh hym of gentillesse of hise. Auncestres and semblable thynges ¶ Alle this maneye of folk / ben shryven hem in hyr synnes / that they ne wol nat delivere hem self / for sothly / no knight / that exciteth hym wilfully of his synne / may nat been delivered of his synne / til that he weekly / biknoweth his synne

¶ Of the pt wrongfully the sacrement of the auter

¶ After this / thanne cometh wrecchyng / that is expres / agayn the comandement of god / and this bifalleth ofte / of angre / and of pryde / god seith thow shalt nat take the name of thy lord god in veyn / or in ydel / also oure lord crist seith by the word of seint matheew / ne wol ye nat wreke in alle maneye / neither by heveene / for it is goddes trone / ne by erthe / for it is the bench of his feet / ne by jerusalem / for it is the citee of a greet kyng / ne by thyn heed / for thou mayst nat make an heer white ne blak / but seyeth by youre word / ye / ye / and nay / nay / and what that is more / it is of yvel seith crist / for cristes loore wreeketh nat so synfully / in destourbynge of crist / by soule / heele / bones / and body / for elles / it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede jewes / ne destourbeden nat ynough the pryncipal persone of crist / but ye distourbe hym more / ¶ And if so be that the lacke compelle yow to wreke / thanne pule yow / after the lacke of good / in youre wrecchyng / as seith jeremye / c°. ¶ Thou shalt kepe / my / commandements / Thou shalt wreke in trouthe / in doom / and in right wisnesse / this is to seyn / thou shalt wreke sooth / for every lesynge is agayns crist / for crist is verray trouthe / and thynk wel this / that every greet wreker / nat compelled lakkefully to wreke / the kynde shal nat departe from his hous / that he useth / wikked vengeful wreechyng / Thou shalt wreken eek in doom / whan thou art constreyned by thy domesman / to witnessen the trouthe ¶ eek

¶ Of wrecchyng /

¶ Iuratis. 4°. nolite iurare omnino

¶ Iurabis in veritate in iudicio & in iustitia

¶ Thou shalt nat
otheye / for envye / ne for
fawny / ne for meede / but
for rightwisnesse &c

¶ Crist Petyr. Act. 4°.

¶ Paulus ad Philipenses 2°.

¶ Of the ytt. delitem̃e in
otheyyng. for gentrie
and of usage.

¶ Of the otheyyng of
Adiuracion & coniuracion.

¶ Of hem ytt. bileeven
in dyuynailes

¶ Of charmes for wounde
des / or maladie

¶ Of lesynges

¶ Thou shalt nat otheye / for envye / ne for fawny / ne for meede / but for
rightwisnesse / and for declaracion of it / to the worshipe of god / and shel
pyng / of thyne evene cristene / And therfore / every man that taketh
goddes name in ydel / or falsly otheyeth with his mouth / or elles
taketh on hym the name of crist / to be called a cristene man / and
lyveth agayns cristes lyvynge and his techynge / alle they / taken
goddes name in ydel ¶ Loke eek what seint Petre / with Act. 4°.
Non est aliud nomen sub celo &c ¶ There nys noon oothere na
me with seint Petre / under heevene yeven to men / in which
they mowe be saved / that is to seyn / but the name of Jhesu crist /
¶ Take kepe eek / how that the precious name of crist / as with seint
Paul / Ad Philypenses / 2°. In nomine Jhesu &c ¶ that in the name
of Jhesu evry knee of heevenely creatures / or erthely / or of helle
sholden bowe / for it is so heigh and so worshipful / that the cru
ele feend in helle / sholde tremblen / to heeren it ymencioned /
¶ Thanne semeth it / that men pt otheyen so horribly / by his bles
sed name / that they despise hym moore boldely / than do the cru
ele jewes / or elles the deuel / that trembleth whan he heereth his
name ¶ Loo eetes / with that otheyyng / but if it be lawefully doon
is so heighly offended / muche worse is forsweryng falsly / And yet
nedelees ¶ What seye we eek / of hem / that deliten hem in otheyyng /
and holden it a gentrie / or a manly dede to otheye grete othes / And
what of hem / that of verray usage ne cesse nat / to otheye grete o
thes / al be the cause nat worth a stree / certes it is horrible synne
¶ Otheyynge ydeynely / with oute any profit / is eek a synne /
But lat us go now to thilke horrible otheyyng / of adiuracion
and coniuracion / as doon thise false enchauntours / or nigromau
ciens / in bacyns ful of water / or in a sweord bright otheyed / in a cercle or
in a fyr / or in a shulder-boon of a sheep / I kan nat seye / but that
they doon cursedly / and dampnablely agayns crist / and al the /
feith of holy chirche ¶ What seye we of hem / that bileeven in di
vynailes / as by flight / or by noyse of bryddes / or of beestes / or by
sort / by geomancie / by dremes / by chirkynge of dores / or crak
kynge of houses / by gnakynge of rattes / and other manere /
wycchednesse / certes al this thyng / is defended by god / and by
al holy chirche / ffor which they been accursed / til they come to
amendement / that on which filthe ootheren hire / bileeve ¶ Char
mes for woundes or maladie of men / or of beestes / if they taken
any effect / it be paventure that god suffreth it / for folk sholden
yeve the moore feith / and reverence to his name ¶ Loo holy /
spoken of lesynges / which generally / is false signifycacion
of word / in entente to deceyven his evene cristene ¶ Loo lesyn
ge is / of which / they / nouth noon avantage to no wight / And /
loo lesynge / turneth to the ese and profit / of o man / and to dise
se and damage of another man ¶ Another lesynge for to ex
cuse his wif or his child / worth of delit / for to lye / in which delit
they wol forge a long tale / and peynten it with alle circum
stances / where / al the ground of the tale is falls / Loo lesynge

couth/ for he wole eustene his wo. And com lesynge/ couth of
verrheldeshesse with outen amendement/ and semblable thynges But
os mowe touche/ the vice of flateryynge/. which no couth nat gladly
but for drede/ or for coveitise. Flateryye is gendrure/ of wrongful
preysynge/ Flateryes been the deueles norices/ that norissen hise
children/ with mylk of losengerie/. for ofte/ Salomon seith. that/
flaterie is worse than detraction. for comunyne/ detraction/ mak
eth an hauteyn man/ be the more humble/. for he dredeth detracci
on/ but certes flateryye/ that maketh a man/ to enhaunsen his herte
and his contenaunce/ Flateryes been the deueles enchauntours
for they make a man to renie of hym self/. be lyk/ that he nys nat/
lyk/. they been lyk to judas/ that betrayed a man/ to sellen hym
to his enemy. that is to the deuel Flateryes/ been the deueles
chapelleyns/ that syngen euermore/ Yeue/ yeue/ yeue/ in the vi
ces of vs. for ofte tyme/ if a man/ be wroth with another/ thanne
wole he flatere and wright. to sustene hym/ in his vices/ Ye
se me now/ of which tunynge/ as touth of mous herte/ Royall son
generally/ may be seyd euery manere power or thyng/ which tun
ynge/ bynemeth man the regne of god/ as seith seint paul/. and
ofte tyme/ with tunynge wrongfully/ retorneth agayn to hym pt
tuyseth/ as a byrd that retorneth agayn/ to his owene nest/ And o
uer alle thynges/ men oghten eschewe to tuysen hyr children/ and ye
uen to the deuel hyr engendrure/ as forforth/ as in hem is/. etes it
is grete pil and grete synne. Now vs thanne speken of chidynge
and repreue/ which been/ ful grete wounder in mannes herte/ for they
unsoken/ the roules of freendshipe in mannes herte/ For etes/ some
thes may a man/ pleynly been accorded with hym/ that hath hym
openly repreued and repreues in disclaundre/ This is a ful gret
ly synne/ as crist seith in the gospel/. and taak kepe now. that he p
repreueth his neighebor/. outhey he repreueth hym by som shame of
peyne/ that he hath on his body/. as yeuel/ moked haylot/. or by som
synne that he dooth/ Now/ if he repreue hym by shame of peyne
thanne turneth the repreue to his crist/. for peyne is sent/ by the
rightwys ordre of god/ and by his sufferance/ be it yeuel/ or wel/ peyne
or maladie/ And if he repreue hym vnchastitee of synne/. as thou
vnkelde haylot/ and so forth/. thanne axteneth that/ to the reioysynge
of the deuel/. that euer hath ioye/ that men doon synne/ And etes chidyn
ge may nat come/ but out of a vileyns herte/ For after the habundan
ce of the herte/ speketh the mouth ful ofte/ And ye shul vnderstonde
that looke by any weye. whan any man shal chastise another/ that he
be war/ from chidynge and repreuynge/. for trewely/ but he be war
he may ful lightly/ quyken the fyr of angre and of wratthe/ which pt
he sholde quenche. and parauenture sleeth hym/ which that he myghte
chastise with benignitee/ For as seith Salomon/ the amyable tonge
is the tree of lyf. that is to seyn/ of lyf espirituel/. and soothly. a
deceyuable tonge/ sleeth the spirites of hym that repreueth and eek
of hym that is repreued/ Loo/ what seith seint Augustyn/ ther is
no thyng so lyk the deueles child/. as he/ that ofte chideth/ Seint

Of flateryynge

Thoo flateres been the deueles norices

Salomon

Of tunynge pt couth of mous herte

Sanctus paulus

Of chidynge & repreue

Thoo flateres been the deueles enchauntours

Thoo flateres been the deueles chapelleyns

Salomon

Sanctus Augustinus

¶ Seint paulus

Paul seith ecc̄ſ.7 seruant of god/ ne sholde nat to chide/ And holde p̄t chidynge/ be a vileyns thyng/ bitweye alle maneye folk/. yet is it/ eyther/ moost conuenable/ bitweye a man and his wyf/. for there is nede reste/ and therfore seith Salomon/. An hous that is vncouered and droppynge/. and a chidynge wyf/ been lyke ¶ a man that is in a droppynge hous in many places/. though he eschewe the droppynge in o place/ it droppeth on hym/ in another place ¶ so fareth it/ by a chydynge wyf/. but she chide hym in o place/ she wol chide hym in anop

¶ Salomon

¶ Paul as colonienſ.3°. ¶ Of strynge

¶ Of yeuynge of wikked. conseil

¶ Of eschat folk/ p̄t a man shal eschuen to taken his conseil

¶ Of hem that setten and maken discord

¶ Of the synne of double tonge

¶ Of bileyynge of conseil.

¶ Of ydel wordes

¶ Of iangleynge

¶ Salomon

¶ philosophus

And therfore/ bettre is a morsel of breed with ioye/ than an hous ful of delices with chidynge seith Salomon ¶ Seint paul seith also. Wyues/ be ye subgetes to youre housbondes/ and ye men/ louyeth youre wyues. as colonienses. 3°. Afterward/ speke eke of strynge. which is a wikked synne/. and namely whan he strayneth a man for his goode speche/. for certes alle the straynes/ payen lyk the fouls tode/ that may nat endure/ to smelle the soote sauour of the wyn/ whan it flowrissheth ¶ These straynes/ been p̄tyng/ flaterres with the deuel. for they han ioye/ whan the deuel wynneth. and sorwe whan he leseth. they been aduersaries of crist. for they hateu that he loueth. that is to seyn/ saluacion of soules Speke eke of wikked conseil. for he p̄t wikked conseil yeueth/ is a traytour. he deceyueth hym p̄t trusteth in hym Vt achitofel ad absolonem. But natheles/ yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hym self. for as seith the wise man. euery fals synnynge hath his peyne in hym self. that he p̄t wole anoye another man. so anoyeth first hym self ¶ And men shul vnderstonde that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk/. nor of angry folk/. or grenous folk/. that louen especially to muchel thy owene profit. ne to muche woldly folk/ namely/ in conseilynge of soules Ne seith the synne of hem that setten and maken discord among folk. Which is a synne that crist hateth outrely. and no wonder is/ For he deyde for to make con cord. And more shame do they to crist. than dide they/ that hym cruci fieden/ for god loueth bettre/ that frendshipe be among folk. than ther dide his owene body. the which that he yaf for vs. They ben they likenes to the deuel/ that euere been aboute to maken discord

¶ Ne seith the synne of double tonge. which as spoken fayre by fore folk. and wikkedly bihynde. or elles they maken semblant. as though they spoke of good entencion. or elles in game and pley and yet they speke of wikked entente Ne seith bileynge of conseil. through which a man is defamed/ certes/ whoso/ may ha restore the damage Ne seith manace. that is an open folye. for he that ofte manaceth. he threteth more than he may parfourme ful. ofte tyme Ne seith ydel wordes. that is with outen profit of hym that speketh the wordes. and eek of hym/ that heyreth the wordes. Or elles ydel wordes/ been tho that been nedeles/ or with outen entente of natureel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been some tyme venial synne. yet sholde men vouchen hem. for ther shul yeue reke nynge of hem bifore god Ne seith iangleynge. that may nat been with oute synne. And as seith Salomon. it is a synne of apert folye/ and therfore/ a philosophre seyde. That men axes hym/ how

that men sholde plese the peple. and be ausedyse do makyn goode lyv
kes. and eek serke iangles. Afyer this. comth the synne of iapeyes ¶ Of the synne of iapers
that been the deueles apes. for they maken folk to laughe at hym ia
pere. as folk don at the gambedes of an ape. Swiche iapeyes deffen
deth seint paul. ¶ loke folk that vicious wordes and hooly wor
des confonden hem that trauaillen in the seruice of crist. right so con
fonden the vileyns wordes and knakkes of iapers. hem that tra
uaillen in the seruice of the deuel. Whan been the synnes that
comen of the tonge. that comen of ire. and of otheys synnes mo

¶ Sequit remedium contra ptem Ire

The remedie agayns ire. is a vertu that men clepen mansu
etude. that is debonayretee. and eek another vertu pt men
callen pacience or suffrance. ¶ Debonayretee restreyneth and
refreyneth the stirynges and the moevynges of malice in
his herte. in suche maneres that they ne skippe nat out by angre
no by ire. ¶ Suffrance suffreth certeinly alle the anoyances and re ¶ Of debonayretee
proues that men doon to man outward. ¶ Seint ieronime seith ¶ Of suffrance
thus of debonayretee. that it dooth noon harm to no wight ne seith. ¶ Beatus ieronimus
ne doth noon harm that men doon or seyn. ne ne destourbeth nat agayns
his reson. ¶ This vertu debonayretee comth of nature. ffor as seith the
philosophre. a man is a ful wyk thyng by nature. debonaire and ta ¶ Philosophus
table to goodnesse. but certein debonayretee is enformed of grace than
ne is it the more ofte. ¶ Pacience that is another remedie. a ¶ Of pacience
gayns ire. it is a vertu that suffreth certeinly ech mannes goodnesse
and is nat wroth for noon harm that is doon to hym. ¶ The phi ¶ Philosophus
losophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonaire
ly alle the outrages of aduersitee and euery wikked thyng. ¶ This
vertu maketh a man lyk to god and maketh hym goddes owene ¶ Ad filium sapientem
deere child. as seith crist. this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy. ¶ And
therfore seith the wise man. Ab thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy
lerne to suffre. ¶ And thou shalt vnderstonde that man suffreth ¶ Nota. iiij. maner of grevan
iiij. maneres of grevances in outward thynges. agayns the whiche ces. that man suffreth in
iij. he moot have. iij. maner of pacience. ¶ The firste grevance is of outward thynges
wikkede wordes. thilke suffrede thu crist. with outen grutchyng ful ¶ The firste grevance
pacientli. whan the iewes despised and repreued hym ful ofte. ¶ Suf ¶ Remedium
fre thou therfore pacientli. for the wise man seith. If thou stryue with ¶ Ad de sapiente
a fool. though the fool be wroth or though he langhe. algate thou shalt
have no reste. ¶ That oother grevance outward. is to have damma ¶ The. ij. grevance
ge of thy catel. ¶ Theragayns suffred crist ful pacientli. whan ¶ Remedium
he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf. and that was but
hise clothes. ¶ The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his ¶ The. iij. grevance
body. ¶ Thatt suffred crist. ful pacientli in al his passion. ¶ The ¶ Remedium
fourthe grevance. is in outrageous labour in werkes. Therfore I seye. ¶ The. iij. grevance
that folk that maken hir wyl to travailliden. to grevously or out
of tyme. as on haly dayes. soothly they do grete synne. ¶ Theragayns ¶ Remedium
suffred crist ful pacientli and taughte vs patience. whan he hadde

upon his wrisses shulder the croys upon which he sholde suffren
despitous deeth ¶ Heere may men leyne to be pacient. for ellis
noght oonly cristen men been pacient. for loue of thu crist and
for goddis of the blissful lyf that is ȝeuyale. but eek the olde pay
ens that nelde keye cristene conneden and vseden the vertu of
pacience ¶ Philosophre vp on a tyme that sholde haue been his
disciple for his grete trespas for which he was greetly annoyed
and broghte a ȝeyde to scourge with the child. and whan this child
caught the ȝeyde. he seyde to his maistey. what thenke ye do? I.
shal bete thee quod the maistey for thy correccion ¶ ffor sothe quod
the child ye oghten first correcte youre self. that han lost al youre
pacience for the gilt of a child ¶ ffor sothe quod the maistey al ek
ȝyuge thise seyst sooth. haue thise the ȝeyde my deere sone and
correcte me for myn impacience ¶ Of pacience comth obedience ¶
thurgh which a man is obedient to crist. and to alle hem to whiche
he oghte to been obedient in crist ¶ And vnderstond ek that obe
dience is ȝfit. than that a man dooth gladly and hastily with good
herte entierly al that he sholde do ¶ Obedience generally is to ȝfourme
the dooctryne of god and of his ministres to whiche hym oghte to ben
obeyssant in alle rightwisnesse ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶

¶ Sequitur de Accidia ¶

After the synne of Enuye and of the. wole I now speken of
the synne of Accidie. for Enuye blyndeth the herte of man
and ek troubleth a man. and Accidie maketh hym hevy
thoghtful and wrawful ¶ Enuye and ek maken bitternesse in
herte. which bitternesse is moodey of Accidie and bynymeth hym the
loue of alle goodnesse. thanne is Accidie the anguissh of troubled herte
and seint Augustyn seith. it is anoy of goodnesse and ioye of harm.
Certes this is a damnable synne. for it dooth vyolence to thre thynges
muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to crist with alle
diligence as seith Salomon. but Accidie dooth no swich diligence. he
dooth alle thynge with anoy and with slawnesse slakneesse and excu
sacion and with ydelnesse and malyce. ffor which the book seith. Accur
sed be he that dooth the service of god necligently ¶ Thanne is Accidie ene
my to eueryche estaat of man. for ellis the estaat of man is in iij. maneres
Firstly it is the estaat of Innocence. as was the estaat of Adam bifore
that he fil in to synne. in which estaat he was holden to whiche as in
heryinge and adoreshynge of god ¶ Another estaat is estaat of synful
men. in which estaat men been holden to laboure in preyinge to god for
Amendement of hire synnes. and that he wolde graunte hem to aryssen
out of hire synnes ¶ Another estaat is the estaat of grace. in which estaat
he is holden to keyes of penitence. and ellis to alle thise thynges is Acci
die enemy and contrayre. ffor he loueth no bisynesse at al ¶ Wrooth ellis
this foule vileyn Accidie. is eek a ful sleyghty enemy to the welfare of the
body. for it ne suffreth no plesaunce agayn temporel necessitee. for it
slombreth and forsluggeth. And destorbeth alle goodes temporeles by

¶ Thoos Acidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle

¶ of the synne of slouthe ¶

¶ Salomon ¶

¶ remedie agayn slouthe ¶

¶ Tria sunt vermadum ¶
¶ of hem to bigynne
Any goode werkes ¶

¶ Gregorius ¶
¶ of the synne of Envye ¶

¶ Dionisius ¶

¶ Super Lucam Evangelio ¶ 226 in Exa

¶ In eodem Evangelio ¶

¶ Super Lucam de latrone.
Confessus cum xpo ¶ 226

¶ 226 ¶

¶ Of Idumpnolence ¶ / 226

verthelees ¶ The fourthe thyng is · that Acidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle · by cause of hir slouthe and of hir heuynesse for they that been dampned been so bounde · that they ne may neither wel do ne wel thynke ¶ of Acidie couth first that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse · and maketh that god hath abhominacion of whych Acidie ¶ Ooth couth slouthe · that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce · ffor soothly slouthe is so tendre · and so delicat as seith Salomon that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne penaunce · and therfore he shendeth al that he doth ¶ Agayns this vice hath holy chirche ordeyned many spirituel remedies · as ordres confessions and many other sacramentes ¶ Also ther been many bodily werkes and temporeles that been ordeyned agayns slouthe · and namely and vertuously to withstonde and destroyen the vice of slouthe · thynkynge that our lord jhu crist · quiteth every good dede be it never so lite · ¶ Bisynesse of labour is a greet thyng · for it maketh as seith seint Bernard the laborer to have stronge armes and harde synwes · and slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre ¶ Also couth diverse manere to bigynne to werke any goode werkes · for certes he that is entendynes to synne · hym thynketh it is so greet an emprise for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse · and taketh in his herte that the circumstances of goodnesse been so grevouse and so chalengeable for to suffre · that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse as seith seint ¶ Gregorie Ooth couth Envye · that is hatred of the vertu of god · that couth contynue of to muche outrageous sorwe · and contynue of to muche wrathe · ymaginynge that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availlen hym · though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne · though which destruyeth or wrathe he abandoneth al his herte to every manere synne as seith seint augustin · Which dampnable synne if that it contynue vn to his ende it is cleped synnynge in the holy goost ¶ This horrible synne is so perilous · that he that is destroyed therby nys no feloun ne no synne that he douteth for to do · as sheweth wel by Judas ¶ Certes aboven alle synnes therinne is this synne · moost displesant to crist and moost agayns ¶ Soothly he that speweth hym is lyk the wikked chanon yerealit and nedeles destroyeth · certes the mercy of god is euere redy to every penitent · and is aboven alle his werkes ¶ Allas what man nat drynke hym on the gospel of seint Luc · vj · Where as crist seith · that as wel shal there be joye in heuene upon a synful man that doth penitence · than up on xcix · rightful men that neden no penitence ¶ Look forthey in the same gospel the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone · whan his sone with penitence was retourned to his fadre ¶ Kan they nat remembren hem eek · that as seith seint Luc · xxiij · how that the theef that was hanged biside Jhu crist · seyde · lord remembre of me · whan thou comest in to thy regne ¶ ffor sothe · Jhu crist · I seye to thee · to day shaltow been with me in paradys ¶ certes there is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf destroyed by penitence · through vertu of the passion and of the deeth of crist · Allas what nedeth man therinne to been desperat · sith his mercy is so redy and large · aye and therto ¶ Therinne cometh Idumpnolence that is sloggy slombrynge · which maketh a man be

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heuy and dul/ in body and in soule. and this synne couth of slouthe and reytes/ the tyme that by dey of reson men sholde nat slepe. that is by but if they hede cause resonable. for soothly/ the more tyde is moost conuenable a man to seye his preyeres/ and for to thynken on god/ and for to honoure god. and to yeuen almesse to the poure. that fyst/ cometh in the name of Crist. lo what seith Salomon. Iesso oo sholde by the more awaken and seke me/ so shal synne Shame cometh recligence/ or yetheleesnesse/ that rekketh of no thyng. and hook that Ignorance be moodey of alle haym/ reytes recligence is the norce

Salomon

Of recligence/ or yeche leesnesse

Recligence ne dooth no fors/ what he shal doon a thyng. whether he do it heel or badely Of the remedie of this two synnes. as seith the wise man. that he that dredeth god/ he casteth nat to doon that he oghte doon. and he that loueth god/ he shal doon diligence to plese god by his dedes/ and abaundone hym self/ with al his myght/ hel for to doon Shame couth yelnesse. that is the yate of alle haymes.

Of the remedie ayens recligence and yetheleesnesse. Fili sapiencia

Of yelnesse

An yel man/ is lyk to a place that hath no walles. the deueles may entre on euery syde and shoten at hym at discouert/ by temptacion on euery syde This yelnesse is the thurlok/ of alle wikkes and vileyns thoghtes/ and of alle iangles/ tryfles/ and of alle ydel wordes/ the seuene is yeuen to hem that shol labouren and nat to ydel folk/

David

Wel David seith/ that they ne been nat in the labour of men ne they shul nat been chastysed with men/ that is to seyn in purgatorie/ certes Shame knoweth it. they shul be tormented with the deuel in helle but if they doon penitence Shame couth the synne that men clepe Tarditas. as whan a man is to late vese/ or tarynge er he shole/ tyme to god. and dooth/ that is a greet folie. he is lyk to hym that/ falleth in the dych. and shal nat arise. and this vice couth of a fals hope. that he thynketh/ that he shal lyue longe. but that hope/ faileth ful ofte Shame couth lachesse. that is he/ that whan he bigynneth any good werk/. anon he shal forleten it/ and cesyuten as soon they/ that han any myght to goodne/ and ne taken of hym no more kepe anon as they fynden any contrarie or any anoy These been the nedle shepherdes/ that leten hir sheep wityngly go renne to the wolf/ that is in the wodes/ or do no fors of hir owene gouernaunce of this/ couth pouste and destruccion. bothe of spirituel and temporel thynges Shame couth a maneres coldnesse/ that freseth al the herte of a man Shame couth enuie thurgh which a man is bleut/ as seith Seint Bernard. and hath wikked langour in soule. that he may neither rede ne synge in hooly chirche/ ne herie/ ne thynke of no deuocion/ ne trauaille with his hondes in no good werk/. that it nys hym vnsauory and al trauailles Shame weyeth ho slouth and sloubyne and soone shal be wroth/ and soone is enuyned to hate and to enuye Shame couth the synne of worldly sorwe. which as the wyes tristicia. that sleeth man/ as seint Paul seith/ for ther sorwe worcheth to the deeth of the soule & of the body also/ for ther of couth p^t a man is anoyed of his owene lif. wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lif of man. er p^t his tyme be come by dey of kynde

Of the synne p^t men clepen Tarditas

Of the synne of lachesse

Of coldnesse of a mannes herte

Of enuie

Sanctus Bernardus

Of worldly sorwe

Sanctus Paulus

Agayns this horrible synne of Accidie. and the braunches of the same. they is a vertu that is calles fortitudo. or strength that is an affection thurgh which a man despiseth anoyouse thinges ¶ This vertu is so mighty and so vigerous. that it may withstonde mighti ly and wisely kepen hym self fro pils that been cleped. and chaste a gayn the assautes of the deuel. for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule right as accidie abateth it and maketh it feble. ffor this fortitudo may endure by long sufferance the trauailles that been conenable ¶ This vertu hath manye speces. and the fyfte is cleped magnificence. ¶ Of magnanimitee that is to seyn greet corage. for ther by disposeth greet corage agayns Accidie lest that it ne stroke to the soule by the synne of sorwe ne stoppe it by wanhope ¶ This vertu maketh folk to vndertake hyghe thinges and grenouse thinges by hir owene wil wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the deuel fighteth agayns a man. more by queyntise and by sleighte. than by strengthe. therfore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecion ¶ Magnanimitee ¶ Of the vertues of ferth and hope is they the vertues of ferth and hope in god and in hise sentes to a cheue and acomplice the goode werkes in the whiche he purposeth feyne ly to continue ¶ Magnificence ¶ Of magnificence is vertu of cheerfulnesse or lightnesse. and that is. whan a man ne wanteth no trauaille in tyme conuenable of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne ¶ Magnificence is vertu that is to seyn whan a man doth and pursueth grete werkes of goodnesse and that is the ende whi that men sholde do goode werkes. for in the acomplissinge of grete goode werkes. lith the grete guerdon ¶ Magnificence ¶ Of constaunce is they constaunce. that is stablenesse of corage. and this sholde been in seyte by stedefast ferth. and in mouth and in beryinge. and in chere and in dede. ¶ Ne they been noo spedale remedies agayns Accidie in thise werkes. and in consideracion of the peynes of helle and of the ioyes of heuene. and in trust of the grace of the holy goost that wole yeue hym myght to pursue his goode entente ¶ Explicit de magnificencia ¶

¶ Incipit de magnanimitate ¶

After Accidie wol I speke of Auarice and of couetise of which synne seith seint paul. that the roote of alle harmes is couetise. ad Thimotheum. vi°. ffor soothly whan the herte of a man. is confounded in it self and troubled and that the soule hath lost the confort of god. thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thinges ¶ Auarice after the descripcion of seint Augustyn. is likerousnesse in herte to haue erthely thinges. ¶ Now oothers folk seyn that auarice is. for to purchacen manye erthely thinges. and no thing yeue to hem that han nede ¶ And vnderstond that auarice ne stant nat only in loue ne catel but continue in science and in glorie. And in euery manere of outra geous thing is auarice and couetise ¶ And the differences bitwixe auarice and couetise is this ¶ Couetise is for to couete of thise thinges as thou hast nat. and auarice is for to withholde and kepe of thise thinges as thou hast without rightful nede ¶ Soothly

¶ Vitus paulus ¶ What auarice is sm. augustinus ¶ Of the differences bitwixe auarice and couetise

¶ Auaricia

this auarice is a synne that is ful dampnable. for al holy-
writ curseth it and speketh agayns that vice. for it doth wrong
to ihu crist. for it bireueth hym the lone that men to hym oweu
and turneth it bakward agayns alle resun. and maketh that the
auaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in ihu crist
and doth more obseruaunce in kepyng of his tresor than he doth
to seruice of ihu crist. and therfore seith seint paul ad ephesios
5°. that an auaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie ¶ what
difference is bitwyxe an ydolastre and an auaricious man. but
that an ydolastre parauenture ne hath but o mawmet or two
and the auaricious man hath many. ffor etes euerych floryn in
his cofre is his mawmet. and etes the synne of mawmettrie
is the fyrste thyng that god defendeth in the ten comaundementz
as beyeth witnesse in exodi c°. 20 ¶ thou shalt haue no false-
goddes bifore me ne thou shalt make to thee no graue thyng. thus is
an auaricious man that loueth his tresor bifore god an ydolas-
tre. thurgh this cursed synne of auarice ¶ of couetise comen-
thise haryde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreyned by tay-
lages custumes and cariages more than hyr duetee or reson is.
and eek they taken of hyr bonde men amerciamentz. whiche myghte
more resonably ben cleped extorcions than amerciamentz ¶ of whi-
che amerciamentz and raunsonynge of bondemen come lordes ofty
grauges. seyn that it is rightful. for as muche as a theef hath no
temporeel thyng that it ne is his lordes as they seyn. but etes
thise lordshipes doon wrong that bireuen hyr bonde folk thynges
that they neuer yaue hem. augustinus de ci. li°. 9°. ¶ doth is pt
the condicion of thraldom and the fyrste cause of thraldom is for
synne genes. 9°. ¶ thus may ye seen that the gilt disserueth
thraldom. but nat nature. wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat
muche glorifien hem in hyr lordshipes with that by natureel con-
dicion they been nat lordes of thralles. but that thraldom comth
first by the desert of synne ¶ and forthy ouer they as the la
we seith that temporeel goodes of bonde folk. been the goodes
of hyr lordshipes. ye that is for to vnderstonde. the goodes of the
comyn to defenden hem in hyr right. but nat for to robben he
ne reuen hem ¶ and therfore seith seneca ¶ thy prudence sholde
lyue benygnely et thy thralles. thilke pt thou threpest thy thral
les been goddes peple. for humble folk. been cristes freendes
they been contubernyal et the lord ¶ thynk eek that of swich
seed as thewes springeth. of swich seed springen lordes. as
wel may the theef be cause as the lord. the cause seeth pt taketh
the theef. which seeth taketh the lord. wherfore I rede be right
wys with thy theef as thou wouldest that thy lord were with thee
if thou were in his plit. euery synful man is a theef to synne
I rede thee eschewe that thou lord weere in which wise with thy ther-
les. that they rather-lowe thee than dreede ¶ foot wel ther-
is degree aboue degree. as reson is and skile it is that men
do hyr deuoir ther as it is due. but etes extorcions and

¶ Thauly as epistre. 6°.
¶ of the difference bitwyx
an ydolastre and an a
uaricious man

¶ Cyprian c°. 20

¶ of couetise

¶ Augustinus de ci. li°. 9°.

¶ Genes. 9°.

¶ Seneca

¶ Ars

¶ Genes / nyales dicitur ¶ Cananan filius chus ¶ ¶

¶ Of hem þ pilen & doon extorcions in holy chirche ¶

¶ Crisus Augustinus ¶

¶ Eadem mensura &c ¶

¶ Of deceite / bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt ¶

¶ Of bodily marchandise. that is leueful & honeste ¶

¶ Of espirituel marchandise / that is symonye ¶

esprit of poure knyghtes / is damnable ¶ Thus forthey-on wisely stoond wel / that thise conqueroures / or tyraunts / maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born / of as roial blood as been they / that hem conqueren / ¶ This name of thraldom / was newe erst Noeth. tho that Noe seyde / that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to his brethren for his synne. What seye we thanne / of hem that pilen and doon extorcions in holy chirche? ¶ Certes / the forme that men yeuen first to a knyght / whan he is newe dubbed / signifieth / that he sholde defenden holy chirche / and nat robben it ne pilen it. And therto sooth is that tonyt to crist ¶ And as seith seint Augustyn / they been the wodes lolnes that strangle the sheep of thu crist. And doon worse than lolnes. For soothly / whan the wolf hath ful his wombe / he stynteth to strangle sheep. / But soothly / the pilours and destroyours of goodes holy chirche / ne do nat so / for they ne stynte neuer to pile. Nor as I haue seyd / eith so is / that synne / was first cause of thraldom. thanne ne is it thus. / that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne. thanne was al this world in thraldom and subiection. But certes / eith the tyme of grace cam / god ordeyned that oon folk sholde be more seigh in estaat and in degree. and oon folk more lough. and that euerich sholde be ordeyned in his estaat. And therfore in olde tymes they they hyen thralles. whan they han tymes hem to the-ward. they maken hir thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes / the lord seith to his man. that the man seith to his lord / the more calleth hym self seruant of the seruantz of god. / But for as muche as the estaat of holy chirche. ne myghte nat han be ne the comune profit myghte nat han be kept. ne pees and reste in erthe / but if god hadde ordeyned that oon men hadde hyer degree and oon men lower / therfore / was couenient ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and defenden hir owne lordshynges or hir subgetz in reson / as ferforth as it lith in hir power. and nat to destroyen hem ne doon hem

¶ Therefore I seye / that thilke lordes that been lyk wolues that deuouren the possessions or the catel of poure folk wrongfully eith outen iudy or mesure / they shul receyuen by the same mesure that they han mesured to poure folk / the iudy of thu crist / but if it be amended. For eith seith seneca bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt ¶ And thoo ben shrewes / whosoeuer thenketh that marchandise is in manye maneres. that oon is bodily and that oother is goostly. that oon is honeste and leueful. and that oother is dishoneste and vnleueful. Of thilke bodily marchandise that is leueful and honeste. is this. / that thilke as god hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to hym self. thanne is it honeste and leueful. that of habundance of this contree. that men helpe another contree that is more nedy. And therfore they moote been marchantz to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother hir marchandises. ¶ That oother marchandise that men haunten eith shame and vileynye and deceite. eith leesynges and false othes / is cursed and damnable. espirituel marchandise is gretely symonye. that is entente desyr to byen thyng espirituel. that is / thyng that aperteneth to the sentinal me of god / and to cure of the soule. this desyr if so be that a man do his diligence to performen it / al be it / that his desyr ne take noon

¶ Of whom Symonye
beyeth his name

¶ Of diuise maneres of
Symonye

¶ Of another maneye
of Symonye

¶ Thus Damasus

¶ Of hastiluye & his
apurtenances

¶ Of auaryce. coueit-
esynges. fals witnesse.
and falsse othes

¶ Of fals witnesse

¶ Of the synne of
thefte

¶ Of thefte toward

effect. yet is it to hym a deedly synne. and if he be ordred. he is inegu
lecy ¶ Certes Symonye is cleped of Simon magus. that wolde han bought
for temporeel catel. the yifte that god hadde yeuen by the hooly goost. to
seint petre and to the apostles. And therfore vnderstoond that bothe
he that selleth and he that beyeth thynges espirituels. been clepyed
Symonyals. be it by catel. be it by preyynge. or by flesshly preyere
of his freendes. flesshly freendes. or espirituel freendes ¶ flesshly
in two maneres. as by kynrede. or other freendes. soothly if they
praye for hym that is nat worthy and able. it is Symonye. if he ta
ke the benefice. and if he be worthy and able they nys noon ¶ That
oothey maner is. whan a man or woman preyen for folk to auaunce
hem oonly. for wikked flesshly affection that they han vn to the ypone
and that is foul Symonye. But certes yf men yeuen
thynges espirituels vnto hir vsaunce. it moot been vnderstonde. that
the seruice moot been honeste. and elles nat. And eek that it be with
outen bargaynynge. and that the ypone be able. for as seith seint
Damasie. alle the synnes of the world at regard of this synne aren
as thyng of nought. for it is the grettest synne that may be. after the
synne of lucifer and antecrist. for by this synne god forleseth the
chirche and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood. by hem that
yeuen chirches to hem that been nat digne. for they putten in theues
that stelen the soules of ihu crist. and destroyen his pestilence. by
whiche vndigne preestes and curates. han lorded men the lasse reuerence
of the sacrement of hooly chirche. And whiche yeftes of chirches put
ten out the children of crist. and putten in to the chirche the wolues
ofkene come. they sleen the soules that lambes sholde kepen to the
wolf that strangleth hem. And therfore shul they nede han part of
the pastire of lambes. that is the blisse of heuene. But certes whoso
saisyne with his apurtenances. as tables and cloþes. of which comth
deceite. falsse othes. chidynges. and alle vanytees. blasphemynge and
reneiynge of god. and hate of his neighebores. wast of goodes. mys
spendynge of tyme. and sodeynne manslaughte. certes swich sacrifise
ne mocke nat been with outen grete synne. Of auaryce comen eek
lesynges. therfro. fals witnesse. and falsse othes. And ye shul vnder
stonde that thise been grete synnes. and expres agayn the comaunde
ments of god as I shal seye. ¶ Of fals witnesse. is in word and
eek in deede. In word as for to bireue thy neighebores goode name
by thy fals witnessyng. or bireuen hym his catel or his heritage by
thy fals witnessyng. whan thou for hate. or for meede. or for enuye. be
rest fals witnesse. or accuset hym or excuset hym by thy fals wit
nesse. or elles excuset thy self falsly. as yerk questemongers
and notaries ¶ certes. for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful grete
sorwe and peyne. And many another mo. ¶ The synne of thefte
is eek expres agayns goddes heeste. and in two maneres. as for to take
or eschuyen. as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl
be it by force or by sleighte. be it by met or by mesure. By sto
lyng eek of falsse enditements vpon hym. And in borwynge
of thy neighebores catel. in entente neuere to payen it agayn

and semblable thynges ¶ Espyrituel theefte is sacrylege. that is to seyn huntynge of hooly thynges. or of thynges sacred to crist in two maneres. by reson of the hooly place. as chirches or chirche hakkes. for which euery vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be clepes sacrylege. or euery violence in the semblable places ¶ Also they that withdraken falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche ¶ And pleynly and gendrally. sacrylege. is to reneu hooly thyng fro hooly place. or vnhooly thyng out of hooly place. or hooly thyng out of vnhooly place

¶ Of thise espyrituel

¶ Releuacio contrarium Auarice

¶ Now shul ye vnderstonde. that the releuynge of Auarice. is myserycorde and pitee rightfully taken. and men myghten aye. Thy that myserycorde and pitee. is releuynge of Auarice. ¶ Certes the auaricious man. sheweth no pitee ne myserycorde to the needful man. for he deliteth hym in the keepynge of his tresor. and nat in the releuynge ne releuynge of his euene cristene. and therfore speke I first of myserycorde ¶ Thanne is myserycorde as seith the philosophre. a vertu by which the corage of a man is stired by the myseise of hym that is myseised. vp on which myserycorde folweth pitee in prouynge of charitable deedes of myserycorde ¶ And eke thise thynges moeuen a man to myserycorde of thilke crist. that hath yaf hym self for our gilt. and suffred deeth for myserycorde and forgaf vs our originale synnes. and thus by releesed vs fro the peynes of helle. And amenused the peynes of purgatorie by penitence and geueth grace wel to do. and atte laste the blisse of heuene ¶ The speces of myserycorde been. as for to leue and for to yeue. and to forgyue men and releesse. and for to han pitee in herte and compassion of the meschief of his euene cristene. And eek to chastise there as nede is

¶ Of myserycorde & pitee

¶ What myserycorde is fro whom

¶ Of thynges that holde moeue a man to myserycorde

¶ Of the speces of myserycorde

¶ Another remedie ayeyns auarice is resonable largesse but soothly herte bihoueth the consideracion of the grace of thilke crist and of hise temporel goodes. and eek of the goodes perdurables that crist yaf to vs. and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyue. he woot whanne. where. or how. and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath. saue oonly that he hath despended in goode werkes.

¶ Another remedie of releuacio contrarium auarice

¶ But for as muche as oon folk been vnmesurable. men oghten eschue fool largesse that men clepen waste ¶ Certes he that is fool large. ne geueth nat his catel but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he geueth for veyne glorie. as to iogelours and to folk. for to. han his renoun in the world. he hath synne therof and noon al messe. certes he leseth foule his good. that ne seketh with the yifte of his good no thyng but synne. he is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drynken drouy & troubled water than for to drynken cla ter of the deepe welle. And for as muchel as they geuen. they as. they sholde nat geuen. to hem aparteneth thilke malisoun that eft shal fallen at the day of doome to hem that shullen been damned

¶ Of fool largesse

Sequit de Gula

After auarice cometh Glotonye which is expres ech agayn the commandement of god. Glotonye is immesurable appetit to ete or to drynke or elles to doon ynogh to the vn mesurable appetit and desordeynee coueitise to eten or to drynke. This synne corrumpes al this erthly. as is wel shewed in the synne of adam and of Eue. Loke ech what seith seint Paul of Glotonye. Manye seith seint Paul goon of whiche I haue ofte seyd to yow. and now I seye it wepynge that been the enemys of the croys of crist. of whiche the ende is deeth. and of whiche hir wombe is hir god and hir glorie in confusion of hem that so renoumen esthely thynges. He that is vsaut to this synne of glotonye he ne may no synne withstonde. he moot been in seruage of alle vices. for it is the veueles hoord they he hideth hym and restreyneth. This synne hath many speces. The firste is dronkenesse. that is the horrible confusion of mannes resoun. and therfore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun. and this is deedly synne. But soothly whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke. and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke. or hath feblesse in his heed. or hath trauailled. thurgh which he drynketh the more. al be he sobrely taught what drynke it is no deedly synne but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is. that the spirit of a man wexeth al troublee. for dronkenesse bireueth hym the discretion of his wit. The thridde spece of glotonye. is whan a man renoueleth his mete. and hath no lykynge whan he shal ete. The fourthe is. whan thurgh the grete habundance of his mete. the humours in his body been destempred. The fifthe is. for yeelnesse by to muchel drynkynge. for which sourtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe. what he dide at euen. or on the nyght biforn. In oother maner been distinct the speces of glotonye after seint Gregorie. The firste is. for to ete biforn tyme to ete. The seconde is. whan a man get hym. to delicat mete or drynke. The thridde is. whan men taken to muche ouey nesse. The fourthe is. curiositee with greet entente. to maken and apparaillen his mete. The fifthe is. for to eten to gredily. Thise been the fyue fyngres of the veueles hand. by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

Remedium contra Gule

Contrarius glotonye is the remedie abstinence. as seith Galien. but that holde I nat necessarie. if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn seith that abstinence be doon for vertu and with patience. Abstinence he seith is litel worth. but if a man haue good wil therto. and but it be enforced by patience and by charitee. and that men doon it for goddes sake. and in hope to haue the blisse of heuene. The speces of abstinence been. Attempraunce. that holdeth the meene in alle thynges. Sek shame. that eschueth alle dishonestetee. Suffisaunce. that seketh no riche metes ne drynkes. ne dooth no force of to outrageous apparail

Of what thyng ariseth glotonye

The fyfte spece of glotonye

The .ij. spece of glotonye

The .iij. spece of glotonye

The .iiij. spece of glotonye

The .v. spece of glotonye

Of other maner speces of glotonye. whiche been likned to the .v. fyngres of the veueles hand. Seint Gregorie

Augustyn

Of the feleshes of abstinence

Attempraunce

Shame

Suffisaunce

lyuge of mete ¶ Mesure also. that restreyneth by reson the resaunce
appetit of etynge ¶ Sobrenesse also. that restreyneth the outrage-
of dyuke ¶ Spalyuge also. that restreyneth the delicat ese to sitte
louge at his mete and softely. Wherfore oon solle stonden of hy-
ostene clepyl to eten at the lasse leyser

¶ Mesure

¶ Sobrenesse

¶ Spalyuge

¶ Septimus de luxuria

After Glotonye thanne comth lecherie. for these two synnes been so ny cosyns. that ofte tyme they shal nat departe. god woot this synne is ful displesant thyng to god. ffor he defyeth hym self so no lecherie. and therfore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne in the olde lawe ¶ If womman thral take in this synne. she sholde be beten with stones to the deeth. and if she were a gentil womman she sholde be slayn with stones. And if she were a bisshopes doghter she sholde been brent by goddes comandement ¶ ffor ther ouer by the synne of lecherie god dreynte al the world at the diluge. And after that he brente .v. cites with thonder leyt and sank hem in to helle. Moore shal men speke thanne of thilke stynkynge synne of lecherie that men clepe Auoutrie. of wedded folk. that is to seyn. if that oon of hem be wedded. or elles bothe ¶ Seint John seith that Auoutrers shullen been in helle in a stank brennynge of fyr and of brymston for the stynk of his grete. delites the brekynge of this mariement is an horrible thyng. it was maked of god hym self in paradys and confermed by jhu crist as witnesseth seint mathew in the gospel. A man shal lete fader and moodr. and taken hym to his wif And they shullen be two in o flesh ¶ This mariement betokneth the knyttynge togidres of crist and of holy chirche. And nat oonly that god forbad Auoutrie in dede. but eek he comanded that thou shuldest nat coueite thy neighebores wif ¶ In this heeste seith seint Augustyn. is forboden alle manere coueitise to doon lecherie Also that seith seint mathew in the gospel. that who so seeth a wo man to coueitise of his lust. he hath doon lecherie est hym in his herte. Herof may ye seen that nat oonly. the dede of this synne is forboden. but eek the wille to doon that synne ¶ This foule synne anoyeth grieuously hem that it haunten And first to hyr soule. for he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of. eeth that is perdurable. Vn to the body. anoyeth it grieuously also for it defyeth hym. and wasteth. and shent hym. And of his blood he maketh catel. fire to the feend of helle. it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen. yet is it a fouler thyng. whan that for whych ordre. wommen dispenden vp on men hir catel and sub staunce ¶ This synne ac certh the persone bireueth man and wommman hir goode fame. and al hyr honour. And it is ful plesaunt to the deuel. for they hir defyaunce he. the moore partie of this world. And right as marchaunt deliteth hym moost in

¶ Of diuerse maneres to diuerse women of estaat for the synne of lecherye

¶ Hoor for the synne of lecherie al the world was dreynt And .v. cites brent & sonken

¶ Of the synne of Auoutrie

¶ Ad Rom primo

¶ Seint Augustyn

¶ Mathei .v.to

¶ Ad Cor .vi.

¶ Ysa

¶ Of .v. fyngres of the deueles hand

¶ The fiſte fynger

¶ The .iij^de. fynger

¶ Salomon

¶ The .iij^de. fynger

¶ The .iij^de. fynger

¶ Thoo & thiſe olde lecchours/ been likned to hoūdes

¶ Ire

¶ Thou a man ſholde louen his wyf

¶ The .v^e. fyngre of the deueles hand

¶ Of thiſe ſpeces of lecherie

¶ Of the ſynne · to bireue · a maydē/ of hir maydenhede

¶ Luxuria

chaffare that he hath moost auantage of · ryght ſo deliuereth the feend in thyne ſeruyce · this is that oothey hand of the deuel with · v · fyngres to cacche the people to his vilenyne ¶ The fiſte fynger is the fool lookynge of the fool woman · and of the fool man · that ſeeth ryght as the baſilicok ſleeth folk by the venym of his eighte · for the toucheinge of eyen ſlaeth the toucheinge of the herte ¶ The ſeconde fynger is the vileyns touchynge in likerous maneres · and they fare with Salomon · That who ſo toucheth and ſeuſeleth a woman · he faareth lyk hym that handeleth the ſcorpion · pt ſtyngeth and odeynly sleeth · thogh his enuenymynge · as who ſo toucheth ſaam pyth · it ſheut his fyngres ¶ The thridde · is foule wordes · that faareth lyk fyr · that ryght anon brenneth the herte ¶ The fourthe fynger is the kiſſynge · and peckely he kepe a gret fool · that wolde kiſſe the mouth of a brennynge Ouene or of a fouleys · And moore fooles been they that kiſſen in vileynye · for that mouth is the mouth of helle · and namely thoſe olde dronken horibles · yet wol they kiſſe thogh they may nat do and ofttyme hem ¶ Certes they been lyk to hounds · for an hound whan he couth by the roſey or by other beautees · thogh he may nat pysse · yet wole he heue vp his leg · & make a countenaunce to pysse · And for that many man weneth · that he may nat ſynne · for no likerouſneſſe that he doth with his wyf · certes · that opinion is falſe · god woot · a man may ofte ſhen hym ſelf with his owene knyf · and make hym ofte ſpoken of his owene tonge · certes be it wyf be it child or any worldly thyng · that he loueth biforn god · it is his mawmet · and he is an ydolaſtre ¶ Man ſholde loue his wyf by diſcretion ryghtfully and attempreely · and thanne is ſhe · as though it were his ſiſter ¶ The fifthe fynger of the deueles hand is the ſtynkynge vice of lecherie ¶ certes the · v · fyngres of glotonie the feends put in the mouthe of a man · and with hise · v · fyngres of leccherie · he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym in to the fourneys of helle · there as they ſhul haue fyr and the wormes that ete ſhul laſten · and wepynge and gnaſſynge of teeth · for the iuſtiſe of god ſeeth that the members of deueles that ſhulden al to thise ſynnes with outen repentaunce and with outen ende ¶ Of lecherie as I ſeyde ſholden diuerſe ſpeces ¶ As fornicacion that is bitwixe man and woman that been nat maryed · and this is deedly ſynne and agayns nature · al that is enemy and deſtruccion to nature · is agayns nature · ſay the lesen of a man telleth eek hym wel that it is deedly ſynne · for as muche · as god forbad lecherie · and ſeint paul ſeyeth hem the vengeaunce that vpon hem cam for this ſynne · but to hem that doon deedly ſynne ¶ Another ſynne of lecherie · is to bireue a maydē of hir maydenhede · for he that ſo doth · certes he caſteth a maydē out of the hyeſte degree that is in this preſent lif · and bireueth hir thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the hundred fruyt · we kan leye it noon oothey leyes in engliſſh · but in latyn it highte centeſimus fructus ¶ certes he that ſo doth · is cauſe of many damages and vileynyes moo than any man kan telle · right as he that tyne is cauſe of alle damages that beeſtes doon in the feeld · that breketh the hegge or the cloſure · through which he

destroyeth. that may not been restored. ffor eftes manoore may may
deuyse be restored. than an ajen that is auyten fro the body may re
tourne agajn to eyre. she may haue mercy this eyre. if she
do penitence. but neede shal it be. that she was corrupt. And al be
it so that I haue spoken somwhat of auoltrie. it is good to speken
mo pils that longen to auoltrie. for to eschue that foule synne.

Auoltrie in latyn is for to seyn. appechynge of oothey manmes bed.
thurgh which tho that chosen o flesch abandonne hir body
es to otheye psones. Of this synne as seith the wise man folweth
manye harmes. ffirst blekynge of feith. and eyres. in ferth is the
keye of cristendom. and whan that ferth is broken and lorn. oothly
cristendom stant veyn and eith outen fruyt. This synne is
eek a theefte. for theefte generally is for to reue a wight his thyng agajns
his wille. eyres. this is the foulest theefte that may be. whan a
womman steleth hir body from hir housbonde and yeueth it to hire
holowy to defoulen hir. and steleth hir soule fro crist and yeueth it
to the deuel. this is a fouley theefte. than for to breke a chirche and stele
the chalice. ffor thise auoltreys breken the temple of god spiritually
and stelen the vessel of grace. that is the body and the soule. for which
crist shal destroyen hem. as seith seint paul. Soothly of this thef
te doutes gretly joseph. whan that his lordes wif preyed hym of vi
leynye. whan he seyde. lo my lady. how my lord hath take to me and
my wyf al that he hath in this erth. ne no thyng of hise thynges
is out of my power but only ye that been his wif. and how sholde
I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agajns god and a
gajns my lord. god it forbeede. allas al to litel. is which thouthe wolde
y founde. Alle thise thinges han. is the filthe thurgh which they breken.
the comandement of god. and defoulen the auowy of matrimoyne pt
is crist. for eyres in so muche as the sacrement of mariage is so
noble and so digne. so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it. for god
made mariage in paradys in the estaat of innocence to multiplye.
man kynde to the encrees of gods. and therfore. is the blekynge more
greuous. of which blekynge comen false heires ofte tyme that wrong
fully occupien folkes heritages. and therfore shal crist putte hem out
of the regne of heuene that is heritage to goode folk. Of this blekyn
ge counseek ofte tyme. that folk mighty dreden or synnen with hir
owene kynrede. and namely thilke baylotes that haunten bordels of
thise fool women. that moste be likned to a comune gonge ther as
men purgen hir ordure. What seye the eek of puttons pt lyuen
by the horrible synne of putrie. and constreyne women to yelden to
hem a reteyn rente of hir bodily puterie. ye sometyme of his owene
kyf or his child. as doon thise bardes. certes thise been cursede synnes
Vnderstoond eek that auoltrie is oft gladly in the ten comaundements
bitwixe theefte and manslaughtre. for it is the grettest theefte that may
be. for it is theefte of body and of soule. and it is lyk to homycide. for it
reneth atte to and breketh atte herte that first were makes of flesch. and
therfore by the olde lawe of god they sholde be slayn. but natheles.
by the lawe of thu crist that is lawe of pitee. whan he seyde to the

¶ Diuina ~

Comman that was founden in auoltrie. and ohulde han been slayn with stones. after the lyl of the lewes as was hir lawe. So quod thu crist/ and saue natwoore lyst to synne. or elle natwoore to do synne ~
Soothly the vengeance of auoltrie is awayted to the peynes of helle but if so be/ that it be destoubles by penitence Yet been they two degrees of this cursed synne. as whan that con of hem is religious. or elles so the. or of folk/ that been entred in to ordre. as subdekne or preest/ or hostiaries. and ene the hyer/ that he is in ordre. the gretter is the synne ~

¶ Of religious and ordred folk/ that vsen letcherye ~ ~ ~

¶ The thynges that gretly agreggen hir synne. is the brekynge of hir avow of chastitee. whan they receyued the ordre/ and forther ouer doth is that hooly ordre. is chief of al the tresorie of god. and his espectal signe and mark of chastitee. to whom that they been ioyned to chastitee ~ Which that is moost precious lyf that is/. and thise ordred folk been espectally titles to god/ and of the espectal meignee of god. for which whan they doon deedly synne. they been the espectal traytours of god and of his peple. for they synnen of the peple/ preestes been aungeles. as by the dignitee of hir mystelye/. but for sothe seint paul seith. that sathanas tranformeth hym in an aungel of light. Soothly the preest/ that hanunteth deedly synne. he may be likned to the aungel of derknesse tranformed in the aungel of light. he semeth aungel of light/ but for sothe he is aungel of derknesse ¶ Suche preestes been the sones of belie. as writeth in the book of kynges. that they weren the sones of belial. that is the deuel/. belial is to seyn with outen yuge. and so fareth they/ hem thynketh they been free and han no yuge. natwoore than hath a free bole that taketh which cow that hym liketh in the toften. so fareth they by women. for right as a free bole. is ynough for al a town. right so is a lykked preest/ comunion ynough for al a wanssho. or for al a contree/. thise preestes as seith the book/ ne konne nat the mysteyne of preesthode to the peple. ne gos ne knowe they nat. they ne holde hem nat apayd as seith the book of sodeu flesch that was to hem offred/ but they take by force/ the flesch that is raw ¶ certes so thise schrewes/ ne holden hem nat apayed of roosted flesch and sode flesch. with which the peple fedden hem in greet reuence. but they sole haue raw flesch of folkes synnes and hir dogtres. and ches thise women that consenten to hir hayltye doon greet wrong to crist/ and to hooly chirche/ and alle halwes. and to alle soules. for they bireuen alle thise. hym that sholde kepe hir crist/ and hooly chirche and preye for cristene soules/. and they fore han wikke preestes and hir lewed names eek that consenten to hir letcherye. the malison of al the cristiene. til they come to amendement ¶ The thridde degree of auoltrie is coueityse bitwixe a man and his wyf/ and that is whan they take no delyt in hir assemblynge. but oonly to hir fleschly delit/. as seith seint ieronie. and ne reken of no thyng but that they been assembled. by cause that they been wedded al is good ynough as thynketh to hem. but in swich folk hath the deuel power/ as seyde the aungel raphael to thobie. for in hir assemblynge they putten out crist out of hir herte. and yeuen hem self to alle ordure ¶ The fourthe degree is. the assemblee of hem that been

¶ Hic nota ~

¶ Hic nota quod ~

¶ Hic nota quod ~

¶ Hic nota quod

of hys kynrede. or of hem that been of oon affynyte. or elles Entre hem with whiche hys fadres or hys kynrede shal deles in the synne of lecherie this synne maketh hem lyk to hounde that taken no kepe to kynrede And thes parentele is in two maneres outher goostly or flesshly. goostly as for to deelen with hise gossibbes. for right so as he that engendreth a child is his flesshly fadre. right so is his gossadre his fadre espirituel. for which a man may in no lasse synne assemblen with hys gossib than with hys owene flesshly brother

Of kynrede in two maneres outher goostly or flesshly

The fifthe spece is thilke abhominyable synne. of which that no man may the ogh te speke ne write. natheles it is openly reherced in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diverse entente and in diverse manere. but though that holy writ speke of horrible synne. certes holy writ may nat been defouled. namoore than the mouth that dyneth on the mynne Another synne aperteneth to lecherie that comth in slepynge. and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes. and eek to hem that been corrupt. and this synne men clepen pollucion that comth in two manere. Outhir synne of langwissynge of body for the humours been to planke and habundaunt in the body of man Outhir synne of infirmetee for the feblesse of the vertu retentif. as phisik maketh mencion Outhir synne for outrage of mete and drynke And outhir synne of vileyns thoghtes. that been enclosed in mannes mynde whan he goth to slepe. which may nat been without synne. for which men moste kepen hem chirely. or elles may men synnen ful greuously

The spece of lecherie

Of the synne of pollucion

Remedium contra predicta luxurie

Now couth the remedie agayns lecherie. and that is gendrally chastitee and continence. that restreyneth alle the desordeynee moevynges that comen of flesshly talentes. and eke the grettest merite shal be shan. that moost restreyneth the sikkernesse of the ordure of this synne. and this is in two maneres. that is to seyn chastitee in mariage and chastitee of clennesse Now shaltow understonde that matrimoyne is leeful assemblynge of man and of womman that receyven by vertu of the sacrement the bond. through which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf that is to seyn. whil that they lyven bothe. This as couth the book is a ful greet sacrement. god maked it. as I shal me seyn in Paradys. and clepede it. he bar in mariage. and for to shalwen mariage. he was at a weddynge. where as he turned water in to wyn. which was the firste myracle that he wroghte in erthe biforn his disciples The verke effect of mariage clenseth fornicacion and replenyssheth holy chirche of goodly lynage. for that is the ende of mariage. It chaungeth deedly synne in to venial synne. but knowe hem that been wedded. and maketh the sheltes alsoon of hem that been wedded. as clene as the bodies. wherby mariage. that was establissed by god. er that synne bigan. was natureel thing. was in his right poynt in paradys. and it was ordeyned. that o man sholde have but o wommman. and o wommman but o man. as couth Seint Augustyn by manye resons Crist for mariage is figured. but knowe Crist and holy chirche. and that outhir is

Of chastitee in two maneres

What matrimoyne is

Of the verke effect of mariage

How o man sholde have but o wommman. And o wommman but o man in mariage by Augustinus

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for a man is heued of a woman. algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. ffor if a woman hadde mo men than oon. thanne sholde she haue mo heuedes than oon. and that were an horrible thyng bifore god. and eek a woman ne myghte nat plese to many folk at ones. and also they ne sholde neuer be pees ne reste amonges hem. for euerich wolde ayen his owene thyng. And for they ouey no man no sholde knowe his owene engendrure. ne eke ho sholde haue his heritage. and the woman sholde been the lasse biloued fro the tyme that she were conioynt to many men. Lo. right couth holt that a man sholde bere hym with his wif and namely in two thynges. that is to seyn in suffisance and reuerence as shewed crist. whan he made first woman. for he ne made hym nat of the heued of adam. for she sholde nat claymen to gret lordshipe. for they as the woman hath the maistrie she maketh to muche desray they neden none ensamples of this. the experience of day by day oghte suffise. Also eke god ne made nat woman of the foot of adam. for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe. for she can nat paciently suffre. but god made woman of the ryb of adam. for woman sholde be felawe vnto man. Man sholde bere hym to his wyf. in feith in trouthe and in loue as seith seint paul. that a man sholde louen his wyf as crist loued holy thinghe. that loued it wel that he deyde for it. so sholde a man for his wyf if it were nede. Lo right holt that a woman sholde be subget to hir housbonde that telleth seint peter. first in obedience. And eek as seith the wyse. a woman that is wyf as longe as she is a wyf she hath noon auctorite to owen ne bere witnesse with oute leue of hir housbonde. that is hir lord. algate he sholde be so hy resonable. she sholde eek weyuen hym in alle honestee. and been attempree of hir array. Coot eek that they sholde setten hir entente to plesen hir housbondes but nat by hir queyntise of array. Seint ierome seith that wyues that been apparailled in silk and in precious purpre. ne mowe nat clothen hem in ihu crist. What seith seint iohn eek in this matere. Seint gregorie eek seith. that no right wyseth precious array. but oonly for veyne glorie to been honoured the more bifore the peple. It is a grete folye. a woman to haue a fair array out ward. and in hir self foul in ward. A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lookynge and in bereynge and in laughynge and discreet in alle hir wordes and hir dedes. and aboue alle worldly thyng she sholde louen hir housbonde with al hir herte. and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf. ffor seith that al the body is the housbondes. so sholde hir herte been. or elles they is bitwyxe hem two. as in that no fyn marriage ne may ther nouen vnderstonde. that for thise thynges a man and his wyf flesshly moeten assemble. The firste. is in entente of engendrure of children. to the honour of god. ffor eke that is the cause final of matrimoyne. Another cause is. to yelden euerich of hem to other the dette of hir bodies. ffor neither of hem hath power ouer his owene body. The thridde is. for to eschewe leccherye. and vilenye. The feythe is for sothe deedly synne As to the

Holt a man sholde bere him with his wyf

Thus sayns

Holt a woman sholde be subget to hir housbonde / Sm seint petre & seyth

Lo Sm seint ieroume

Thus gregorius

Holt a wyf sholde be mesurable in lookynge & bereynge &c

Holt a man & his wyf moeten assemblen flesshly for .iij. thynges

fiste it is shitorie. the seconde also for as outh the secree. that she hath ¶ Thu secret
pt yelseth to hir housbonde the sette of hir body. ye though it be agayu
hir likynge & the luft of hir sexte ¶ The thridde manere is venyal
synne. and theselv stassly may they any thise be & pt oute venial syn
ne for the corruption & for the delit ¶ The fourthe manere is for to vn
derstonde. if they assemble oonly for amorous love & for noon of the for
seyde causes. but for to accomplisse thilke brennynge delit they sekke nede
lock ofte. soothly it is dedly synne. and yet & pt for the olde folk sol-
peynen hem more to doon than to hir appetit suffiseth ¶ The seconde ma ¶ Of chastitee in thoghtes
nere of chastitee is for to been a clene & hydde & eschue the embrasynges
of man & desiren the embrasynge of thu crist. thise been the pt han been
synnes & han forgoon hir housbondes. and eek ouwen pt han doon bette
re & been releeues by penitence ¶ And etes. if pt a wif koude kepen hir
al chaast by licence of hir housbonde so pt she yeue nenere noon occasion
pt he agilte. it eke to hir a grect meryte ¶ Thise manere ouwen pt obser
uen chastitee in clothynge & in contenaunce & been abstinent in etynge. &
drynkynge. in spekynge & in dede. they been the vessel or the boyste of the
blisful magdalene pt fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour ¶ The thridde ¶ Of chastitee in virginitee
manere of chastitee is virginitee. & it bihoueth pt she be hooly in sexte & clene
of body thilke is she spouse to thu crist & she is the lyf of angeles. she
is the preisynge of this world. & she is as thise martirs in egalitee. she
hath in hir. that tonge may nat telle ne sexte thynke. Virginitee may-
dene lord thu crist & virginite was shyn eelue ¶ Another remedie agayns ¶ Of another remedie agayns
lecherie. is specially to withdrawen ofte thynges as yeue occasion lecherie
to thilke vilenye. as ese. etynge & drynkynge forcetes & han the pot
boyleth stongly. the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr of slepynge.
longe in grect quiete. is eek a grect norice to lecherie ¶ Another remedie ¶ Another remedie agayns lecherie
agayns lecherie. is pt a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of he
by whiche he douteth to be temptes. for al be it so pt the dede is withston
den. yet is they grect temptacion. Soothly. a chit cal. al though it
ne brenne nogt fully by drynkynge of a candele. yet it the cal blak of
the lejt ¶ Ffful ofte tyme. dede. pt no man tryste in his owene purcion
but he be stronger than Sampson. & hooliere than Danyel. & wiser tha
Salomon ¶ Loke after pt thu hast dedes yow as I han the owene
dedly synnes & come of hir braunches & hir remedies. Soothly if I.
koude I wolde telle yow the ten comaundements. but so heigh a doctrine
I lete to divines. natheles I hope to god. they been touches in this tre
tice euerich of hem alle

¶ Explicit secunda pars penitencie

¶ Incipit tercia pars penitencie

Now for as muche. as the seconde ptie of penitence stant ¶ What synne is. sm̃ Augustinum
in confession of mouth as I bigan in the firste chapitle
I seye. seint Augustyn seith ¶ Synne is. euery word and
euery dede. & al pt men coveiten agayn the lawe of thu crist. & this
is for to synne. in hexte. in mouth. and in dede by thre fyve wittes ¶ In. mors in cibum & potum & fenestras
that been. sighte. herynge. smellynge. tastynge or savourynge. &
feelynge. Now is it good to understonde that. pt ageyn eth muche

¶ Of thynges p^t aggreggeth synne · and the firste is thrs

¶ The · ij^e circumstaunce

¶ The · iij^e circumstaunce

¶ The · iiij^e circumstaunce

¶ The · v^e circumstaunce

¶ The · vj^e circumstaunce

¶ The · vij^e circumstaunce

eny synne ¶ Thou shalt consydere what thou art p^t doost the synne · Wheither thou be male or femele · yong or old · gentil or thral · free or vnfree · hool or syk · wedded or sengle · ordred or vnordred · lyg or fool · clerk or secular · if she be of thy kynrede bodily or goostly or noon if any of thy kynrede haue synned w^t hym or noon · and manye mo thynges ¶ Another circumstaunce is this · Wheither it be doon in fornicacion or in auoutrie or noon · Incest or noon · maydenhed or noon · in manere of homicide or noon · horrible grete synnes or smale · and how longe thou hast continued in synne ¶ The thridde circumstaunce is the place where thou hast do synne · Wheither in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene · in feeld or in chirche or in chirchehawe · in chirche dedicat or noon · for if the chirche be halwed · & man or woman spille his kynde in eyther that place by way of synne or by wikked temptacion the chirche is entresited · & the preest p^t dide swich a vilenye · to pay me of al his lif he sholde vnnethes synge masse · & if he dide he sholde soon eftsoones synne at eueryy tyme p^t he so songe masse · ¶ The fourthe circumstaunce · is by wheither messagers or by wheither messageys as for enticement or for consentement to leye compaignye w^t felawshipe · for many a wrecche for to leye companye · shal go to the deuel of helle · wherfore they p^t eggen or consenten to the synne been partenerys of the synne & of the temptacion of the synnere ¶ The fifthe circumstaunce · is how many tymes p^t he hath synned if it be in his mynde & how ofte p^t he hath falle · for he p^t ofte falleth in synne · he despyseth the mercy of god & encreesseth his synne & is vnkynde to eft · & he keepeth the more feble to withstonde synne & synneth the more lightly & the lattere arysyng & is the more esyed for to chastyen hym · namely to hym p^t is his confessour · whom that folk shamen they falle agayn in hir olde folies · outher they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely · or elles they beyten hir shrift in dyuerse places · but soothly swich sectes shrift deserueth no mercy of god of hise synnes ¶ The sixte circumstaunce is why p^t a man synneth as by temptacion & if hym self pryue thilke temptacion or by the excityng of oother folk · or if he synne w^t a womman by force or by hir owene assent · or if the womman maugree hir wil hath been afforces or noon · this shal she telle · ffor vnerture or for pouere · & if it was hir prymyng or noon · and swich maner circumstaunces ¶ The seuenthe circumstaunce is · wheither maner he hath doon his synne or how p^t he hath suffred p^t folk han doon to hym · and the synne shal the man telle pleynly w^t alle circumstaunces · and eke wheither he hath synned w^t oon or two or moo · or doon his synne in holy tymes or noon · in fastyng tymes or noon · or bifore his shrifte · or after his laste shrifte · thus hath p auenture spoken therfore his penaunce encreesed · by whos help & whos conseil · by sotyne or craft · almoste be told ¶ Alle thise thynges · after p^t they been grete or smale engreggen the conscience of man · and eek the preest p^t is thy Iuge may the bettre been auysed of his Iuggement in yeuyng of thy penaunce and that is after thy confession · ffor sucessours eek p^t after tyme p^t a man hath bifonnes his baptesme by synne · if he wole conne to

saluacion. ther is noon oother weye but by penitence & chiste & satis
faccion & namely by the two if ther be a confessour to which he may shri
uen hym & the thridde if he haue lyf to p̄forme it ¶ Thanne shal man
looke and considere p̄t if he sholde maken a trewe & a p̄fitable confession ther
moste be .iij. condicions ¶ ffirst it moot been in sorweful bitternesse ¶ Hooly chirche moot been sorweful
of herte. as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to god ¶ Recolam memorabiliter me omnes annos meos in amaritudine
nes of myn lif in bitternesse of myn herte. this condicion of bitternesse ¶ Pro hac confessione egris Ezechiel.
hath fyue signes ¶ The firste is p̄t confession moste be shamefast nat ¶ Hoole confession moste be shamefast
for to telle ne hyden his synne for he hath agilt his god & defoules his
soule. And ther of seith seint Augustyn ¶ the herte bimaulleth for shame ¶ Cor mundum
of his synne and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to haue
greet mercy of god ¶ Swich was the confession of the Pupplicain p̄t wolde nat ¶ Pro hac confessione pupplicani
heuen vp hise eyen to heuene for he hadde offended god of heuene for
which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of god ¶ And ther of seith
seint Augustyn. that swich shamefast folk been next forgyuenesse
& remissioun ¶ Another signe is humylitee in confessioun. of which seith ¶ Of humylitee in confessioun
seint Peter humbleth youre vndre the myghte of god. the hond of god is Unde dicit Petrus
myghty in confessioun. for ther by god forgyueth thee thy synnes. for he
allone hath the power & this humylitee shal been in herte & in signe
outward. for right as he hath humylitee to god in his herte right so shul
se he hible his body outward to the preest p̄t sit in goddes place. ffor
which in no maner seith p̄t eft is oblieyn & the preest mene & mediatour
bitwixe eft & the synnere. & the synnere is the laste. by reson thanne
sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour but knele biforn
hym or at his feet but if maladie destourbe it. ffor he shal nat taken
keepe who sit there but in whos place p̄t he sitteth. A man p̄t hath
trespased to a lord & wolde for to axe mercy & maken his accord. & set hym
down anon by the lord men sholde holden hym outrageous & nat worthy
to soone for to haue remissioun ne mercy ¶ The thridde signe is. how p̄t ¶ How a mannes shrift sholde
thy shrift sholde be ful of teres if man may and if man may nat be fulle of teres
pe with hise bodily eyen lat hym weye in herte. with which the con
fessour of seint Peter for after p̄t he hadde forsake crist eft he wente ¶ Pro hac confessione ois Petri
te out & wepte ful bitterly ¶ The fourthe signe is p̄t he ne lette nat ¶ How a man sholde nat lette
for shame to shewen his confession ¶ With which was the confession of the for shame to shewen his confession
Magdalene p̄t ne spared for no shame of hem p̄t weren atte feeste ¶ Pro hac confessione Magdalene
for to go to oure lord crist eft & bikembe to hym hir synnes ¶ The ¶ How a man sholde been obeissant
fifthe signe is that a man or a woman be obeissant to receyuen to receyue penaunce for hise synnes
the penaunce p̄t hym is enioyned for hise synnes. for eres crist eft
for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth ¶ The seconde ¶ How confession sholde been hastily
con of verray confession is p̄t it be hastily doon. for certes if a man done for swich causes
hadde a deedly wounde enuye the lenger p̄t he taryes to cleepe
hym self the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his deeth
and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to heele ¶ And right
so fareth synne p̄t longe tyme is in a man vnshryuen. certes a
man oghte hastily shryuen his synnes for many causes. as for
drede of deeth p̄t cometh ofte sodeynly. & no deeth what tyme it
shal be ne in what place. & eek the deeth hynge of o synne hangeth
in another & eek the lengere p̄t he taryeth the feblere he is to eft

¶ Secunda pars

And if he abide to his laste day / stalsly may he schryuen hym or remembre hym of hise synnes / or repenten hym / for the grenous maladie of his deth and for as muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf heyknes thu crist / & shame he hath spoken, he shal cne to thu crist at his laste day / & stalsly schol he heyre hym ¶ And vnderstond / pt this condicion moste han foure thynges / thi schrift / moste be pfitable & aduysed. for sikkes haste doth no profit and pt a man konne shryue hym of hise synnes be it of pride or of envye and so forth of the speces & circumstances. & pt he have comprehended in his mynde the nombre & the greetnesse of hise synnes. & holde longe pt he hath leyn in synne. & eek / pt he be contit of hise synnes. & in stidefastnes by the gce of god newe eft to falle in synne. and eek / pt he drede & eschuche him self / pt he fle the occasions of synne to eschuche he is enclynes ¶ Also thou shalt shryue thee of alle thy synnes to o man / and nat a pcel to o man & a pcel to another / . that is to vnderstonde in entente to kepe thy confession as for shame or drede. for it nys but stynkynge of thy mouth / . for ches thu eft is entierly al good in hym nys noon infection. and therfore outher he forzeueth al pfitly or non a deel / . but nat / pt if thou be assigned to the penitencer for eteen synne. pt thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenant of thy synnes. of whiche thou hast be shryuen to thy confessour. but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee / . this is no repastynge of shame. ne I seye nat / ther as I speke of confession / pt if thou have licence for to shryue thee to a discreet & an honeste preest / where thee liketh & by licence of thy confessour. that thou ne mayst wel shryue thee to hym of alle thy synnes. but lat no blotte be bihynde / lat no synne been vnwold / as fer as thou hast remembrance. and whan thou shalt be shryuen to thy confessour. telle hym eek / alle the synnes pt thou hast doon / syn thou were last yshryuen / this is no sikkes entente of confession ¶ Also the verray shrifte axeth certein condicions / Ffirst / pt thou shryue thee by thy free wil nought constreynes. ne for shame of folk / . ne for maladie. ne swiche thynges. for it is reson pt he pt trespaseth by his free wil. that by his free wil he confesse his trespas. and pt noon other man telle his synne but he hym self. ne he shal nat nay te ne denye his synne. ne shal he hym self ageyn the preest for his auenestynge to leue synne ¶ The seconde condicion. is pt thy shrift be lakkeful. that is to seyn / that thou pt shryuest thee / and eek the preest pt heeryth thy confession been dayly in the feith of holy chirche. and pt a man ne be nat desperes of the mercy of thu crist / as Caym or Iudas / and eek a man moot accusen hym self / of his owene trespas and nat another / but he shal blame & chyden hym self & his owene malice of his synne & noon other. but nathelees if that another man be occasion or enticere of his synne. or the estaat of a pson be swich / thurgh which his synne is agregged. or elles pt he may nat pleynly shryuen hym / but he telle the pson / pt which he hath synned. thanne may he telle. so pt his entente ne be nat / to backbite the pson / but only to declaren his confession ¶ Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confession / for humylitee ne daunger to seyn pt thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were neuere gilty ¶ For seint Augustyn seith ¶ If thou

¶ Hold a mannes shrift / moste be pfitable & aduysed biforn

¶ Hold a man shal shryue hym of alle hise synnes to o man

¶ Hold a man sholde shryue hym by his free wil vnconstreyned

¶ Hold a mannes shrift shal be lakkeful

¶ Hold a man moot accusen hym self & noon other of his owene trespas

¶ Nota pro sancto Augustino

by cause of thyn humylitee makest lesynges on thy self. though thou ne seye nat in synne bifore / yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges ¶ Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene ayre mouth / but thou shalt shoye dokkub / and nat by no lettre. for thou that hast won the synne thou shalt have the shame therfore ¶ Thou shalt nat eek enjoute thy confessioun by fayre subtile wordes to covere the more thy synne. for thanne bigilestow thy self / and nat the preest. thou most tellen it pleynly be it never so foul ne so horrible ¶ Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest p^t is discreet to counsille. and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie / ne for ypocrisye / ne for no cause / but oonly for the doute of Jhu crist / and the heele of thy soule ¶ Thou shalt nat eek jape to the preest wilfully to telle him lightly thy synne / as who so telleth a tale or a fable / but auysely and with greet devocioun. and generally shryve thee ofte / yf thou ofte falle / ofte thou arise by confessioun. and though thou shryve thee ofter than ones of synne / of which thou hast be shryven. it is the more merite and as seith seint Augustyn / thou shalt have the more lightly re lessyng / and grace of god / both of synne and of peyne. and resten oones a yeere atte leeste wey / it is ful nedful for to been housled. for resten oones a yeere / alle thynges renouellen ¶ Thou hast herd thou hast of verray confessioun. that is the seconde p^tie of penitence

¶ Explicat secunda pars penitencie. Et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem

The thridde p^tie of penitence is satisfaccioun. and that stant moost generally in almesse. and in bodily peyne ¶ Now been they thre maner of almesses ¶ Contricioun of herte / where a man offreth him self to god ¶ Another is / to han pitee of defaute of his neighebores ¶ And the thridde is / in yevynge of good counseil goostly and bodily / where men han nede. and namely in ministracioun of mannes foode ¶ And tak p^t a man hath nede of thise thynges generally. he hath nede of foode. he hath nede of clothyng and herbergage. he hath nede of charitable counseil and visityng in prisone and in maladie / and sepulture of his dede body. and if thou mayst nat visite the nedful with thy p^sone / visite him by thy messager and thy messager and by thy yiftes. / Thise been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporeel nedes or instruccioun in counsellyng ¶ Of thise werkes shaltow heren at the day of doome. Thise almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene ayre thynges and hastily and prively if thou mayst. but nathelees if thou mayst nat doon it prively. thou shalt nat forbere to doon almesse thogh men seen it / so that it be nat doon for thank of the world. but oonly for thank of Jhu crist / as witnesseth seint Mathew ca°. 4° ¶ A Cite may nat been hyd / that is set on a mountayne. ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it vndey a bussheel. but men sette it on a candelstikke to yeve light to the men in the hous. right so shal youre light lighten bifore men. that they may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre fadey that is in heven. ¶ Now as to speken of bodily peyne. it stant in preyeres in

¶ Thou a man most shewe his synne by his owene ayre mouth

¶ Thou a man shal nat pretenden his confession

¶ Thou a man shal shryven hym to a discreet preest

¶ Thou a man shal nat jape or leyne to shryfte

¶ Item

¶ Item augustinus

¶ Of .iij. maner of almesses

¶ Of the werkes of charitee

¶ Mathi. 4°.

¶ Of bodily penaunce

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Of the ordeyn of the fader in-

Thro gyn Jeronimus

Thork fastynge stant in thre thynges

Of .iij. thynges pt aperteyne to fastynge

Thork bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge

Actus Paulus

Fastynges in festyuales in deuoute techynges of ordeyns And ye shul vnderstonde that ordeyns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wyl of herte that resseyueth it in god and expresseth it by wordes outwayd to re moeuen shames and to shan thynges espirituel and durable and sometyme temporele thynges. of whiche ordeyns certes in the ordeyn of the fader moder hath ihu crist enclosed moost thynges certes it is priuyleged of thre thynges in his dignyte. for which it is moore dig ne than any other preyere. for that ihu crist hym self makes it and it is short for it sholde be lyd the moore lightly. and for to with holden it the moore esily in herte. and helpen hym self the ofter with the ordeyn. and for a man sholde be the lasse slowe to seyen it. and for a man may nat excusen hym to leme it. it is so short and so esy. And for it compriseth in it self alle goode preyeres. the exposicion of this hooly preyere that is so excellent and dygne I betake to thise maistres of theologie. saue thus muchel wol I seyn. that whan thow prayest that god sholde forgyue thee thy giltes as thow forgyuest hem that agilten to thee. be ful wel ware that thow ne be nat out of charitee.

This hooly ordeyn amenuiseth eek venyal synne and therfore it apte neth specially to penitence. This preyere moste be tweked seyd and in good feith. and that men preye to god ordinatly & discreetly & deuoutly. and alwey a man shal putten his wyl to be subget to the wille of god. This ordeyn moste eek been seyd with greet humble se and ful pure honestly. and nat to the anoyaunce of any man or wom man. It moste eek been continued with the wayes of charitee. It may leth eek agayn the vices of the soule. for as seith seint Jerome. By fastynge been saues the vices of the flesh and by preyere the vir tues of the soule. After this thou shalt vnderstonde that bodily peyne stant in fastynge. for ihu crist seith. Waketh and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikkes temptacion. Ye shul vnderstanden also. that fastynge stant in thre thynges. In forberyng of bodily mete and drynke. and in forberyng of worldly iolitee. and in forberyng of goostly synne. this is to seyn that a man shal kepen hym fro goostly synne with al his mygh. And thow shalt vnderstanden eek that god ordeyned fastynge. and to fastynge apteneth .iij. thynges. langueresse to youre folk. gladnesse of herte espirituel. nat to been thi gry ne anoyed ne gruccha for he fasteth. and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure. that is for to seyn. a man shal nat ete in vntyme ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth. Discrecion shal thow vn derstonde that bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge by word and by ensaumple. Also in weryng of heyres or of stamyn or of haubergeons on his nakede flesh for ihu crist sake and swiche manere penances. but war thee wel that swiche manere penances on thy flesh ne make thee nat or angry or anoyed of thy self. for bettre is to taste atwey thyn heyre. than for to taste atwey the swetnesse of ihu crist. And therfore seith seint Paul. Clothe yow as they that been chosen of god in herte. of amesednesse. debonairetee misfiaunce and swich manere of clothynge. of which ihu crist is moore apayed than of heyres or haubergeons or haubekes.

¶ Thanne is disciplyne eek vñ knokkynge of thy breest. vñ stongynge of yeyes. vñ knelynges. vñ tribulacions. vñ suffrynge patiently wronges that been doon to thee. and eek vñ patient suffrance of maladies. or lesynge of worldly catel. or of kyn. or of child. or other swich thynges ¶ Thanne shaltow vnderstonde. whiche thynges destroyen penitence. and this is in .iij. maneres. that is. Despit. shame. hope. and wanhope. that is desperacion ¶ And for to speke first of despit. for which he deyeth that he may suffre no penitence. they agayns is remedie for to thynke. that bodily penitence is but short and litel at regard of the peynes of helle. that is so cruel and so long. that it lasteth with outen ende ¶ Now ayeins the shame that a man hath to shryven hym. and namely thise ypocrites that holden been holden so ypocrite that they han no nede to shryven hem ¶ Agayns that shame. sholde a man thynke that by skyl of reson. that he pt hath nat been shames to doon foule thinges. certes hym ought nat been ashamed to do faire thynges and that is confessions ¶ A man sholde eek thynke that god seeth and woot alle his thoghtes and alle his werkes to hym may no thyng been hyd ne coverd ¶ Men sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to hem that been nat penitent And shryven in this present lyf. ffor alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen aprly al that they hyden in this world ¶ Now for to speken of hope of hem that been necligent and slowe to shryven hem. that stant in .iij. maneres. that oon is pt he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delit. and thanne he wol shryven hym. and as he seith hym seweth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte. Another is surquidrie that he hath in trist of mercy ¶ Agayns the firste vice. he shal thynke that oure lif is in no certeyn esse. and eek that alle the richesses in this world been in aventure & passen as a shadwe on the wal. and as seith seint Gregorie. that it aparteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of god. that ne de shal the peyne certayn. of hem pt ne de sholde departen hem fro synne hir thankes but ayr continue in synne. ffor thilke pretencel cruel to do synne. shul they han pretencel peyne ¶ Wanhope is in .iij. maneres. the firste wanhope is in the mercy of crist. that oother is pt they thynken pt they ne myghte nat longe preveye in goodnesse ¶ The firste wanhope comth of that he deweth that he hath synned so greetly and so ofte and so longe leyn in synne. that he shal nat be saved. Ayeins that synne wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde ¶ Agayns the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth. he may arise ayein by penitence and though he nevere so longe have leyn in synne the mercy of crist is alwey redy to receyve hym to mercy ¶ Agayns the wanhope pt he deweth that he sholde nat longe preveye in goodnesse. he shal thynke pt the feblesse of the devel may no thyng noon but if men wol suffren hym. and eek he shal han strengthe of the help of god. and of al hooly chirche & of the prayeres of Angels if hym list ¶ Thanne shal men vndre-

¶ Of othere wise maneres of disciplyne

¶ Of thise thynges that destroyen penitence

¶ Of Despit of Desese/ and of the remedie ther of

¶ Of shame/ and of the remedie ther of

¶ Of hope & of Surquidrie

¶ Remedie agayn necligent hope

¶ Thus Gregorius

¶ Of wanhope in two maneres

¶ Of the firste wanhope

¶ Remedium

¶ Remedie agayn the .ij. wanhope

¶ Remedie agayn the thridde wanhope

¶ What the fruyt of penaunce is.

stonde what is the fruyt of penaunce And after the wordes of Ihu crist it is the endeles blisse of heuene. there noyse hath no contrarioustee of ther grevaunce. they alle hannes been passed of this present lyf they as is the sikenesse fro the peyne of helle. they as is the blisful compaignye that reioysen hem endelong eueryche of otheres ioye. they as the body of man that whilom was foul & syk. is moore cleer than the sonne. they as the body that whilom was syk feele & feble & mortal is immortal & so strong & so hool that they may no thyng apeyren it. they as ne is neither hunger thurst ne cold but euery soule replenyssed with the sighte of the verray knowleyng of god ¶ This blisful regne may men purchace by pouere espirituel. and the glorie by lowenesse. the plentee of ioye by hunger and thurst and the reste by trauaille. and the lyf by mortificacioun of synne

¶ Here taketh the makere of this book his leue

Lord preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede that if they be any thyng in it that liketh hem that they of they thanken oure lord Ihu crist. of whom proceedeth al wit and al goodnesse. and if they be any thyng that displese hem. I preye hem also that they amende it to the beste of myn konnyng and nat to myn yvel. that wolde fayn haue seyd better if I hadde had konnyng. for oure book seith al that is writen is writen for oure doctryne. and that is myn entente ¶ Wherfore I biseke yow mekely for the mercy of god that ye preye for me that crist haue mercy on me and forgyue me myn giltes. and namely of my translacions and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my retractions as is the book of Troilus ¶ The book also of fame The book of the .xxv. ladies ¶ The book of the Duchesse ¶ The book of Seint Valentynes day of the parlement of briddes ¶ The tales of Cauntebury thilke that sownen in to synne ¶ The book of the leon and many another book if they were in my remembraunce and many a song and many a lecherous lay. that crist for his grete mercy forgyue me the synne ¶ But of the translacion of Boece de consolacion and other bookes of legendes of seintes and omelies and moralitee and deuocion that thanke I oure lord Ihu crist and his blisful moodey and alle the seintes of heuene biseking hem p^t^ they fro hennes forth vnto myn lyues ende sende me grace to bewayle myn giltes and to studie to the saluacion of myn soule and graunte me grace of verray penitence confessioun and satisfaccioun to doon in this present lyf thurgh the benigne grace of hym p^t^ is kyng of kynges and preest ouer alle preestes that boghte vs with the precious blood of his herte so p^t^ I may been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saued. Qui cum patre &c

Here is endes the book of the tales of Cauntebury compiled by Geffrey Chaucer of whos soule Ihu crist haue mercy Amen

The Iud mnde tgt xpc dne mngst

thes worldly ioies, that faier in sight apeares
arr lyeing baits, wherto our minds we cast
thrise blessed they that have repenting yeares
to hate their sinns, and leve their follies past
My inward mane, to hevenly things wold trade me
But aye this flesh, doth still and still dispwade me

RH

Si sapiens fore vis sex septem hic
Fili mihi

Tria sunt mihi incognita et quartum penitus ignoro
Quia volucris super terram
Via nabis volantis in aere
Tria nabis in medio maris et quartum difficilius
Via adolescentis in adolescentia sua

Tria sunt mihi incognita

Thy true Iudi
Pedgeman

fortè fortuna tua non ex omnibus dona
Si non mutaret tuum fortuna parentem

Robert m

Sunt tria que bene facerunt

s si sapiens

Sunt tria que bene facerunt

In trifling tales, by poets told
who spends their time, and breaks their braine
and leves good bookes, & vertews hold
doth spare the shame, and spoile the graine
such fole he build upp, their houses in the sand
and leves gods prewth, by, wt we ought to stand

RH

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Quisquis amas mundum tibi prospice ne sit eundum
Hec via qua vadis via pessima plenaque clavis

Quisquis amas mundum tibi prospice ne sit eundum
Hec via qua vadis via pessima plenaque clavis

Quisquis amas mundum tibi ps

Dns me iudicet iudicium

Thomas Norman
my sarte

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+

To the right worshipfull and my singler good m^r
Edmond Bodmyssolde esquier ^[illegible] these

dum sumus in mundo viuamus recte

dum sumus in mundo viuamus

hengabrill

The knyght // Of Arcite and palamon
The Millers // Of Alison & Absolon & heende Nicholas
The Reue // Of the myller of Trumpyngton
The Cook // Of the Plentys of London
The wyf of Bathe // Of Swhat thyng ye Women louen best
The ffrere // Of the Comono & ye Deuell his Sozn hoped
The Somono // hough a fayr Was dyted m yy: among yy freres
The Clerk of Oxenford // Of Grisilde
The Marchant // Of Januarye and May.
The Squyer // Of Dame Canacee.
The ffrankeleyn // Of Arueragus and Dozegene
The Phisician // Of the knyght dyngmens & his doughtey
The Pardoner // Hough m Riotos founden Deth
The Shipman // Of the Monk & ye Marchants Wif
The Prioresse // Of yonge hugh of lyncoln
Chaucer Sir Thopas.
Melibee and Prudence
The Monke // Of Tragedie / of ffortune & thynde pfpute
The Nonnes preest // of Chauntecleer and Pertelote.
The seconde Nonne // Of the lif of Cecile
The Chanons yeman // of Multiplicacon
The maneple of the Goode
The Persoh Of the iij partes of penitence &c

Me fro the prees and thedk thuth cothfulnesse
Suffise vn to thi good though it be smal.
For hord hath hate and clymbyng trikednesse
Prees hath envye and welo blyndeth ouer al
Cum no more than the by hous shal
Werk wel thi selfe that other folke canst rede
And truthe the shal delivre it is no drede

Tempest the noght al crokes to redresse
Su trust of hyy thatt tryneth as a bal
For gret reste stant in lytel busynesse
And eke be war to sporne a gayn an al.
Stryve noght as doth the crokke with the pot
Daunt thi self that dauntest otheres lost.
And truthe shal delyuer it is no drede.

That the is sent receyue in buxomnesse
The wrastlyng for this worldes axeth a ful
Hed wyse non hom hed wys but Wilnesse
Forth pylgrym forth forth beste out of the stul
I knowe the contree lok vp thank god of al
Hold the hye wey and lat the gost the lede
And truthe shal the bynde it is no drede.
A man be ware and wel avysed. Fey noo thyng but ze[s]en and sey[n]
To speke of thyng that ben dysprysed. I holde yt folye ony day[n]
Ther was a ngyne that men del[e]ed
for thine worne
Quid sis quid fuis quid ez[is] semp[er] memor ez[is]

A man be ware the way ye lede the whyle shalt the thow wost mit[e] wrythe.

Quisquis amas mundum tibi prospice quo sit eundum.
hec ma qua uadis via pessima plenaq; dadis.

Thoedr Early gan. vpō Henry

[illegible]